Saturday Review

OF LITERATURE

TWENTY CENTS DECEMBER 31, 1949

LOST IN THE STARS OF BROADWAY

By HAROLD CLURMAN

(See Recording, page 43)

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The Summing-Up. In Fiction: A. B. Guthrie, Jr., whose "The Way West" was "one of the delights of reading during 1949." Non-Fiction: Eleanor Roosevelt, whose "This I Remember" "added information and interpretation of inestimable value." (See page 5)

The Literary Summing-Up

By KARL SCHRIFTGIESSER

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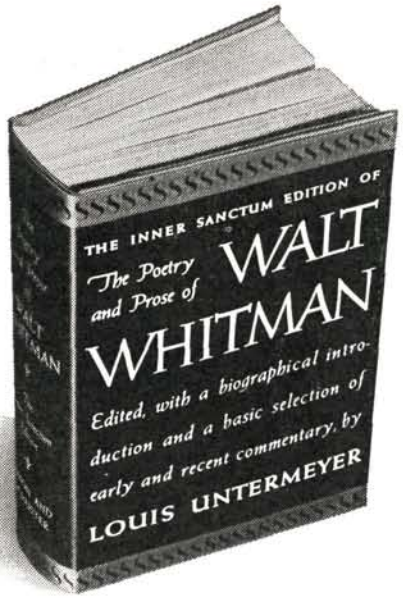
THE INNER SANCTUM EDITION OF
The Poetry and Prose of
WALT WHITMAN
Edited, with a biographical introduction and a basic selection of early and recent commentary, by
LOUIS UNTERMEYER

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WALT WHITMAN was not always "the great American poet" we acknowledge him to be today. Listen to *The New York Times* of 1856, in its review of *Leaves of Grass:*

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Walt Whitman

Edited by Louis Untermeyer. 1224 pages, $5.00, at all bookstores. SIMON AND SCHUSTER

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TRADE Winds

CORN—BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

TRADE WINDS wraps up the year 1949 with its traditional budget of stories that sounded funniest in the six months just gone by. Research discloses, incidentally, that not one of these stories was "originated"—yet—by Walter Winchell.

When Hector McNeil, England's brilliant representative to the U.N., visited the Dutch Treat Club, President Ray Vir Den introduced him with the following anecdote: A decrepit English lord came down with a violent toothache and was bundled off to his dentist for relief. The dentist took a gloomy view of the situation. "This tooth will have to come out, m'Lord," he announced. "It's going to be painful. I'd better give you gas." "In that case," said the lord, "I'll have some of that twilight sleep I've been hearing about." "You must be joking, m'Lord," hazarded the dentist. "Twilight sleep is used exclusively for labor pains." "My God," complained the lord, "have they got that, too?" ... McNeil laughed at the joke, but added this postscript: "I thought twilight sleep was the prerogative of the Tory Party for the past twenty years!" . . . When Danny Kaye was scoring his notable triumph in London, the King and Queen returned twice to see his act. One night they accepted his invitation to a small party backstage after the show. Danny produced a bottle of rare Scotch. The King downed his drink with obvious relish and remarked, "Where did you get that Scotch, Danny? I haven't tasted anything so good in years." Kaye answered, "Your Majesty, you just don't know the right people." . . .

BOB CONSIDINE tells me that fifteen minutes after he read in this column that he is "one of the most versatile and popular writers in the country," he received a phone call from his bank telling him his account was $323 overdrawn. . . . Bob also told of the fracas at Toots Shor's restaurant a few hours after the Notre Dame-North Carolina football game at Yankee Stadium. A well-lubricated Southern gent kept shouting, "If Choo-Choo Justice coulda played today, our boys woulda run those Notre Dame fellahs cleah off the field." A Notre Dame alumnus finally tired of this raucous routine, poked the Southern gent in his midriff, and observed, "Mister, we could beat North Carolina with our Protestant squad." . . . Paul Gibson knows a bell ringer who got tangled up in his rope and tolled himself off. . . . Maybe he's related to Pyke Johnson's prevaricating dentist who made his own teeth and now has to lie in them. . . . Radie Harris met a Hollywood producer who boasted of getting two seats for "South Pacific" at the last minute. "Only cost me fifteen dollars each," he added. "Ha," sniffed Miss Harris, "Annie Oakleys!" . . . Ward Greene, struggling deep in the rough on the fifteenth hole of a New Jersey golf course, grumbled to his caddy, "Why do you keep looking at your watch all the time?" "That's no watch, Mr. Greene," said the caddy. "That's a compass." . . .

JUST AS A lot of wisecracks she never even heard are attributed to Dorothy Parker, so baseball boners pulled by bushers all over the country are pinned to the old Athletics' inimitable screwball, Rube Waddell. The following stunt, however, really was performed by Waddell. He wielded a pretty hefty bat for a pitcher, and was allowed to swing for himself one day in the eighth inning with the score 2-1 against the Athletics, two out, and the tying run on second. The catcher of the opposing nine saw a chance to pick off the runner at second and heaved the ball in that general direction. It ended in center field, and the runner hot-footed for the plate. He'd have made it, too, with plenty to spare, but as the throw came in to the plate, Waddell, to the amazement of everybody in the park, swung at the ball, bashed it over the right-field fence, and was promptly declared out for interference. "Why did you do it?" wailed Manager Connie Mack. "They'd been feeding me curves all afternoon, Mr. Mack," explained the Rube sheepishly, "and this was the first straight ball I'd looked at!" . . .

CYRUS CHING, the Government's ace labor mediator, faced one of his toughest problems when he came to grips with a stubborn Sioux Indian negotiator in a Southwestern strike recently. The Sioux, representing a thousand defiant strikers, presented his demands in writing, and wouldn't budge an inch. Furthermore, the only answer Ching could extract from him was "Ugh." For two solid days he grunted "Ugh" at the termination of every plea of Ching's, and stared stolidly into space. Ching had one last conference with the owners and then approached the Sioux again. "I think I have good news for you," he smiled. "The owners will grant your men a two-dollar-a-day increase in pay." The Sioux again said, "Ugh"—but this time he added quickly, "Is that offer retroactive?" . . .

MAX GORDON, the theatrical producer, inquired as to the whereabouts of a

"It's the messenger, madam, with the latest rule book for canasta."

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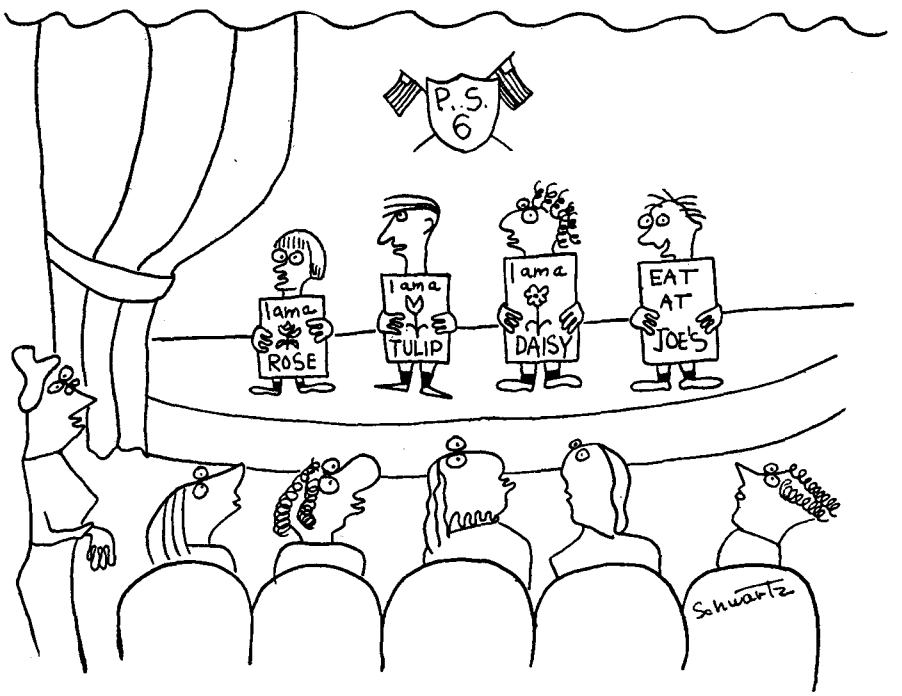
certain brash comedian. "Haven't you heard?" said his secretary. "He died last week in Kansas City." "Too bad," said Max, "but then again, he always did." . . . Another mortality was reported by Leo Guild: a man who won $50,000 on a radio giveaway show and promptly expired of heart failure. That didn't stop the generous sponsors, however. They sent the body on a two-week vacation to Honolulu. . . . "I took out a stuffed shirt last night," publisher Wartels admitted to friends at a Book Circle luncheon, "but I must say that on her it looked fine." . . . An



author was hit by a car on his way to a favorite bar, and was knocked unconscious. The proprietor of the bar summoned an ambulance and watched first aid being administered. "He's coming out of it," he exclaimed suddenly to the interne. "See that motion? He's trying to blow the foam off his medicine." . . . A demure miss was engaged by a manufacturer to distribute little boxes of a new kind of candy free to passers-by. At the close of her first day's work she ran into an old friend, who asked, "Is it true you're going to be married soon?" "Next month," was the answer. "That's wonderful," said the friend. "What are you doing in the meantime?" "Nothing much," admitted the miss. "Just giving away free samples." . . .

FRED BABCOCK, literary editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, immersed in the confusion attendant upon whipping together his bulging holiday book supplement, returned from a hurried snack at an obscure newsmen's retreat called the Pump Room to find three urchins mysteriously in possession of his domain.

Mr. Babcock gingerly approached Urchin Number One, who was engrossed in a review copy of Dr. Vannevar Bush's "Modern Arms and Free Men," and asked, "Well, my little man, what do you want to be when you grow up?" "A scientist," snapped the lad without raising his eyes. "You're reading the right book," admitted Mr. Babcock.

He turned to Urchin Number Two, who was savoring the witty paragraphs in Lloyd Morris's "Not So Long Ago," and ventured, "Now what do *you* expect to be when you grow up?" "A television director," was the answer. "You boys certainly went straight to the books that would help you most," observed Mr. Babcock.

Urchin Number Three obviously was under no literary compulsion. He sat staring in open-mouthed wonder and unconcealed delight at a copious assortment of pin-up girls, movie starlets, and shapely lasses in one-piece bathing suits with which the great editor had covered his wall (no doubt to enable him to appreciate properly the subtleties of a slew of historical novels piled on his desk). Mr. Babcock interrupted the youngster's reverie by asking, "And you, son? What *do you* want to be when you grow up?" The little boy answered rapturously, *"I just want to grow up."* . . .

MID-CENTURY GREETINGS—and a Happy New Year.

—BENNETT CERF.

This Week

December 31, 1949

Cover Photo of Eleanor Roosevelt by Karsh

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—*International News Photo.* —*Angus McBean.* —*Ben Pinchot.*

Isaac Deutscher, Grace Tully, Ivor Brown, Ralph Rusk, and Sean O'Casey—"the richest corner of the literary meadow."

The Literary Summing-Up

1949—From the Ivory Tower and Publishers' Row

KARL SCHRIFTGIESSER

THE world of books has staggered through another year. It is too soon to count the profits and the cost of the confused and confusing industry known as publishing, upon which rests the responsibility for so much of the world's good and bad doing and thinking. There is no machine available in the salesrooms of International Business Machines that is built with fine enough precision to cast a final balance sheet in black and red. Press all the buttons there are, turn all the cranks, pull all the levers, and all that happens is a whirr and clanking. The slip of paper that comes out at the other end is blank.

There should be, of course, a neat tabulation: so many Great Novels, this many books destined to become Classics, that many tomes that will Change the Course of History. But if there were such a gadget probably all it would show would be that at a given date toward the end of December 9,394 books had been released by American publishers. It might go on to show that this was a larger total than had been published last year, but less than in some glorious year, known as the Norm, when more than 10,000 books poured, as they say, from the presses.

But such statistics, neat though they would be, would mean little in assaying the meaning of a year, except in those counting rooms where little men in alpaca coats perch precariously on stacks of remainders writing sad memos for the big boss. No machine is likely to be invented that will cast up the imponderables, that will be able to say in terms of literature that 1949 was "better" or "worse" than 1948, for no machine and few humans are smart enough to define the relative until long after the year in question has receded down the stream of time and become history.

So let us ignore figures, including the cheery report that the publishing business improved in the matter of over-all sales by about 10 per cent over last year, and get on to matters of greater moment. In the higher realm of letters the year 1949 was, I suspect, the best there has been since the end of the war. If it did not rise to great heights neither did it sink below the level of competent achievement. Writing as a whole was in fair condition. There were some novels that were singularly good. There were a large number of biographies and autobiographies of more than ordinary merit. There were histories that will remain on the permanent shelves. There were books about domestic politics and global affairs that added to our knowledge of the world we have to live in. There was some poetry that deserved considered attention. If there was no single book to excite great wonder there were a hundred or more that in their respective fields satisfied the critical reader.

It would be perhaps unfair to say that generally speaking non-fiction came a little higher than fiction. In the former category it would be possible to name fifty titles that should attain some degree of permanence. I doubt if the same could be said of the novels. Most of the latter by the established writers failed to add to the stature of their authors. Nor were there any newcomers whose talents were exactly shining. The better novels were not all mediocre by any means, but the memorable ones were few. This was not true in the field of research and report.

I SHOULD consider any year a successful year that saw published the following five titles: "Stalin," by Isaac Deutscher, "This I Remember," by Eleanor Roosevelt, "Shakespeare," by Ivor Brown, "The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson," by Ralph Rusk, and "Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well," by Sean O'Casey.

Deutscher's study of Stalin would lend luster to any publishing year for it contained all the elements that make a good biography. It had facts, sound documentation, keen characterization, sharp observations, and reasonable conclusions. On a controversial subject it added to the controversy not because of its polemics but because of its scholarly approach to the

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thin ice of history. Beyond that it was written in excellent, clear prose. No one could read "Stalin" without being stimulated by the many implications encompassed in what its author frankly described as a "political biography."

Next to "Stalin" I think Mrs. Roosevelt's "This I Remember" was the most exciting book of the year, although on the same subject Grace Tully's "F. D. R., My Boss" was surprisingly interesting and informative. There have been scores of books about FDR since his death five years ago next April 12. They have examined many, if not all, facets of his character and they have discussed from almost every angle his career as creator of the New Deal and prosecutor of the war. In her perceptive way Mrs. Roosevelt has touched upon most of the pertinent events, adding information and interpretation that not only will be of inestimable value to future biographers and historians but that is charming to read at the present time. Miss Tully, who was his secretary from 1920 until his death, has supplemented Mrs. Roosevelt's portrait with vivid sketches that could only have been made by one who was close to the scene.

In his "Shakespeare" Ivor Brown manages to make full use of the really scanty information that 300 years of research have turned up about the playwright and he has done it with wit and wisdom. Mr. Rusk, dealing with a far different kind of genius in Ralph Waldo Emerson, lacks the wit of a Brown (or a Peter Quennell in "John Ruskin" or a Harold Nicolson in "Benjamin Constant," two brilliant studies in a year which has also seen the happy reprinting of two volumes of Lytton Strachey's essays) but he has brought the Sage of Concord and his period, his thoughts, and his struggles quite surprisingly to life. His is the kind of book that inevitably makes the reader mentally nominate it for a Pulitzer Prize, which may be a kind of damnation. Nobody would pick O'Casey's tumultuous book for that award, even if it were available. But the Nobel Prize Committee, unable this past year to find anyone worthy of its honor among the world's writers, might have done so if they had read the civilized liberalism of "Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well" and the two other volumes which preceded it.

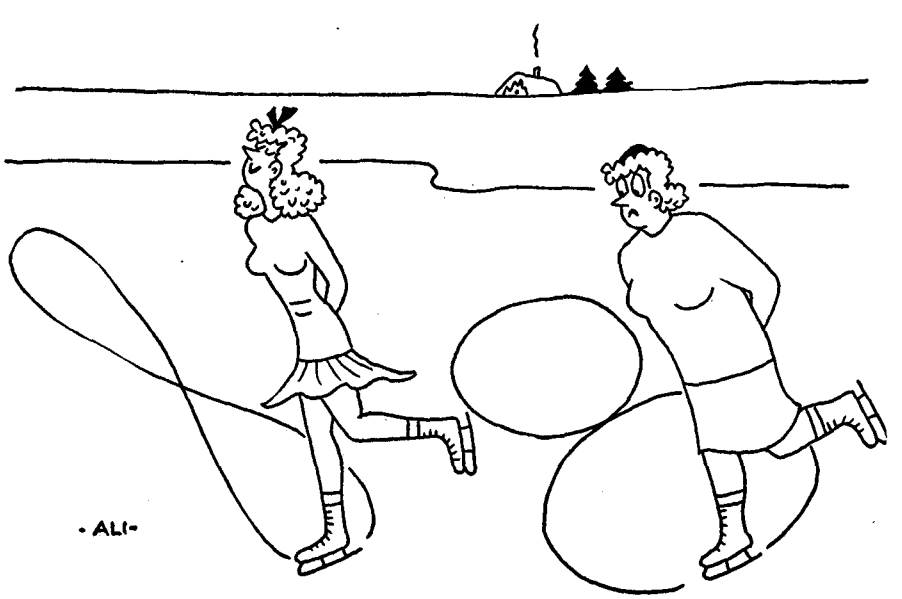
I would not dare to leave what undoubtedly was the richest corner of the literary meadow without passing mention of several other biographies, autobiographies, and diaries which helped make reading the pleasure it was supposed to be during the past year. There was Robert Lewis Taylor's rollicking account of the tragicomedy which was W. C. Fields and Hesketh Pearson's humanization of Dickens; there was Dale Kramer's honest appraisal of the late, and in my estimation great, Heywood Broun, a book long overdue: there was John Dickson Carr's not wholly successful effort at taking the stuffing out of Arthur Conan Doyle; and there was Lewis Gannett's bright story of his week ends at Cream Hill. On a more serious level there was the final volume of André Gide's "Journal," full of meat flavored with sour cream, the "Letters" of Marcel Proust, the "Diaries" of Franz Kafka, the "Notebook" of Somerset Maugham, brittle and bitter.

As if this were not enough for one season there was, for the initiate, the "Autobiography and Other Essays" of G. M. Trevelyan, delightful for their style alone; and essays by and about Arnold Toynbee, who rivals him as an historian but who will never write as well. On the American scene there was F. L. Allen's friendly but honest appraisal of "The Great Pierpont Morgan," Robert H. Elias's first-hand account of Theodore Dreiser, and Samuel Flagg Bemis's exhaustive analysis of the diplomacy of John Quincy Adams. And to end the list—which does not pretend by any means to be complete—I should like to pay tribute to Arturo Barea's sensitive and critically sensible little essay in biography, "Lorca: the Poet and his People." This study of the Spanish poet, of whom so little is known but whose verses are so universally moving, deserves far more attention that it received in a busy year.

Any year which allows the foregoing list to be offered as a sampling of its wares is not, I submit, a year without its thrills, at least not for those who were looking for substance at the same time.

IN THE vast field of general books there were several which were at least of momentary value. Winston Churchill added to his literary laurels, and more generals and admirals added their footnotes to future histories. The late Secretary of State Edward L. Stettinius came convincingly to the defense of Roosevelt at Yalta. It remained for a professional historian, however, to write the most exciting war book. Samuel Eliot Morison, but little restrained by the official nature of his task, wrote dramatically, accurately, and critically about "The Struggle for Guadalcanal," reviving (as he has done before) the old tradition that history can be literature. This is a theory that he has long dinned into the ears of his students at Harvard, much to the dismay of that school, which would walk a mile for a footnote no one else had used before.

As I have been poring over the lists of books of 1949 I have been trying to detect a trend. I note that the best-seller lists (which still exist in spite of *The Saturday Review*'s valiant effort to deflate their importance) continue to carry week in and week out such titles as Peale's "A Guide for Confident Living," Overstreet's "The Mature Mind," and Sheen's "Peace of Soul," books which generally are specified as "inspirational." There is in all of us, I suppose, an uneasiness of spirit, a groping for something to live by, and these books undoubtedly serve a useful purpose. For the same reason novels like "Mary," by Sholem Asch, a newcomer to the list, or "The Big Fisherman," by Lloyd C. Douglas, or



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"The Seven Storey Mountain," by Thomas Merton, continued to sell in 1949 with amazing rapidity. But I do not see that they indicate a general trend toward religion. At least the evidence of the other books which are widely read does not seem to justify such a belief. And they have little to do with literature.

It is, of course, in the art of fiction that we are the more likely to detect a trend than in other books. But there were a few books in other fields that seemed to me to warrant a rather thin feeling that the year 1949 may in the future be considered a year of significance. This may have been the year in which we began to turn to the right. I discount the continuing popularity of T. S. Eliot among the intellectuals or the brazen nonsense of John T. Flynn, whose frightening flummery sets so well with the readers of Pegler and Sokolsky. I am more concerned with the younger intellectuals, the Junior Schlesingers and the Peter Vierecks of our time.

Their concern with finding a middle road—call it the "vital center" if you wish—between left and right is one which, I think, is pervading much of our writing today. The young poet Viereck comes out openly for reaction, indicating that he will not find the choice difficult. A few weeks ago at the breakfast at which Robert Frost was presented with the gold medal of the Limited Editions Club he spoke the poem written when he was as young as Viereck now is. "Two roads," he recited, "diverged in a yellow road, and sorry I could not travel follow both, and be one traveler. . . ." But, as everyone knows, he took "the one least traveled by, and that made all the difference."

IN HIS provocative, and often provoking, book "The Vital Center," Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., makes much of the fact, too often forgotten, that his generation grew up in a world that had already turned left. That was the road *most* traveled by. A generation that started life with Franklin D. Roosevelt already President knew no other. Is it about to become the habit of our new young writers to follow the instinct of youth and take "the road least traveled by"—the road to the right?

In one of the most discussed first novels of 1949, "The Big Wheel," by John Brooks, the young and immature characters find themselves caught in a dilemma typical of the younger intellectuals of our time. In their confusion none of them turns out to be any more courageous than the older, more experienced men and women. In the moment of crisis they surrender. This willingness to give in

Of the 1,517 novels published in 1949 six that elicited mixed or unqualified praise were accounted for by John O'Hara, John P. Marquand, Elizabeth Janeway, Harriette Arnow, George Orwell, and Joyce Cary.

is a strange attitude for youth. And yet, at Brooks's hands, it rings true; the reader is convinced that under the circumstances the running away is about what would happen in real life. I wonder if this negativeness marks the beginning of a trend, along with the rightward turning, which can very well become dangerously more than taking a stand against Communism, although it is, of course, the very understandable basis of Schlesinger's call to take a stand at the "vital center."

With one of our younger poets defending, of all people, Metternich, it may well turn out that Ludwig von Mises is the prophet of our time and his "Human Action" the "Das Kapital" of the New Era of Free Enterprise! But I doubt it. For all the fear spread across the world by the atom bomb, for all the gloom descended upon the new buildings of the United Nations by Russia's attitude, it seems to me that what Hazlitt—William, not Henry!—called the Spirit of the Age was best expressed by David Lilienthal, that man unafraid, in his magnificent definition of democracy as set forth in his truly inspiring book "This I Do Believe."

Mention of Mr. Lilienthal's book leads naturally to two others, both about the transcendingly important subject that is in the front of all our minds, the atom. When "Fear, War and the Bomb" appeared in England it caused great excitement, not so much upon its publication in this country. P. M. S. Blackett's analysis of the military and political consequences of the atomic bomb remains, nevertheless, one of the most penetrating books on the subject. In this country, however, most readers seem to prefer Vannevar Bush's "Modern Arms and Free Men." It was widely and glowingly reviewed by our military men. One reviewer, not a soldier, summed it up by remarking that a better title might have been "Peace of Mind—But Not Much."

These books remind me that 1949, like every year since the first atomic bomb was dropped, was notable for a remarkable omission. We have been so obsessed with the destructive quality of the invention that we have not discussed very fully the other aspect of atomic energy—the economic—which is the aspect that may very well in the long run be the most important. I suggest that one of the real needs of our time is for some present-day John Maynard Keynes to give us a book called "The Economic Consequences of Atomic Energy."

Another topic of interest during the year was the racial-political situation in the South. Lillian Smith came forward with a moving, personal plea for understanding, but I think the most valuable book in this field was "Southern Politics," a massive volume by V. O. Key, one of our outstanding political scientists, and his associates. This was a remarkable study of the politics and people south of the Mason

(Continued on page 26)

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THE LITERARY SAMPLER

EXCERPTS AND JOTTINGS FROM SOME OF THE NEW BOOKS

Survival, Marked Down

THE FIRST MEN who walked erect on their own two feet out of the jungle established their humanity by forming themselves into communities. They were not mere ant-hills, or beehives, or herds, or packs. Something developed that had never been known in the animal kingdom. We know that long before our recorded history had begun the first artisans had emerged, the first scientists, the first spiritual leaders, and the first artists. Man achieved a state of individual dignity thousands of years before he learned how to coin such words.

The first men survived and grew and reproduced their species because they had the basic, primitive knowledge that they must stand together against the terrors of nature. It was only when they had developed a certain prosperity, a sense of security derived from their conviction of superiority over the beasts, that the interests of their various communities began to clash and wars resulted. There can be no doubt that eons passed in the story of mankind before there was any such thing as a professional soldier.

Now, however, we have known some fifty centuries when war has been accepted as an inevitable part of the price of survival. Sometimes wars have been fought for noble purposes and have produced noble results; but too often the stupidity or rapacity of political leaders, or of financial or religious leaders, has condemned hordes of innocent, peaceful people to fruitless agony and death. And too often the people could gain no understanding of why they must suffer and die.

Now, however, the people have gained a degree of understanding far more comprehensive than some anachronistic politicians suspect. We are at a point in history when we can say that even though Utopia in the social or economic or spiritual sense may never be achieved, world peace can be achieved and the human race has no valid excuse for not proceeding to its achievement.

—From "Peace on Earth," introduction by Robert Sherwood (Hermitage).

A Willing Sacrifice

YESHUA was ready. He knew the price that he must pay for his election, and that the road God had prepared for him was paved with fiery thorns. It was often enough he had read the Prophets of salvation, and if he was indeed the Savior he must be ready with the sacrifice that was his debt.

But was his mother ready?

His mother must go with him every part of the way and, whether or not she was to witness his ordeal, Yeshua knew that every wound on his own body would bleed again in his mother's soul. Would she have the fortitude to see her son a willing sacrifice? He remembered every glad tremor which his childish ways and laughter had called out in her face when he was little. How proudly had she watched him from the women's gallery the day he was presented in the synagogue. And today? How would she suffer his humiliation and the cry which the world must raise against him? *Ema, ema!* Tenfold would I take my trials if you could be spared. He did not say this aloud but, laying his hand on hers, asked haltingly:

"*Ema*, did you know my time is near at hand?"

"I know, *tinoki*."

"Are you prepared, mother?"

"What matters it, *tinoki*? God will have His will."

"But, *ema*, God's will is my only crutch on this road. It should be your crutch also."

"Yeshua, I am only a weak woman."

"A mother's weakness is her strength. Your weakness, *ema*, will purge Israel like the blood of a sin offering."

When Miriam looked up at her son the tears stood in her eyes.

"You are my comfort, Yeshua, my son," she said.

And as he let himself down at her side she clasped his head in her hands and laid it on her knees as she had done in his childhood.

—From "Mary," by Sholem Asch (Putnam's).

—Illustration by Mitchell Jameson, from "The Ohio."

Hannibal of the West

GEORGE ROGERS CLARK, the man John Randolph of Roanoke would call "the Hannibal of the West," had lost his last chance for further military glory —through no fault of his own—but his misfortunes were themselves by no means at an end: they would continue to dog him throughout his life. From time to time he is seen, as he pledges his own lands to meet the obligations for arms and supplies

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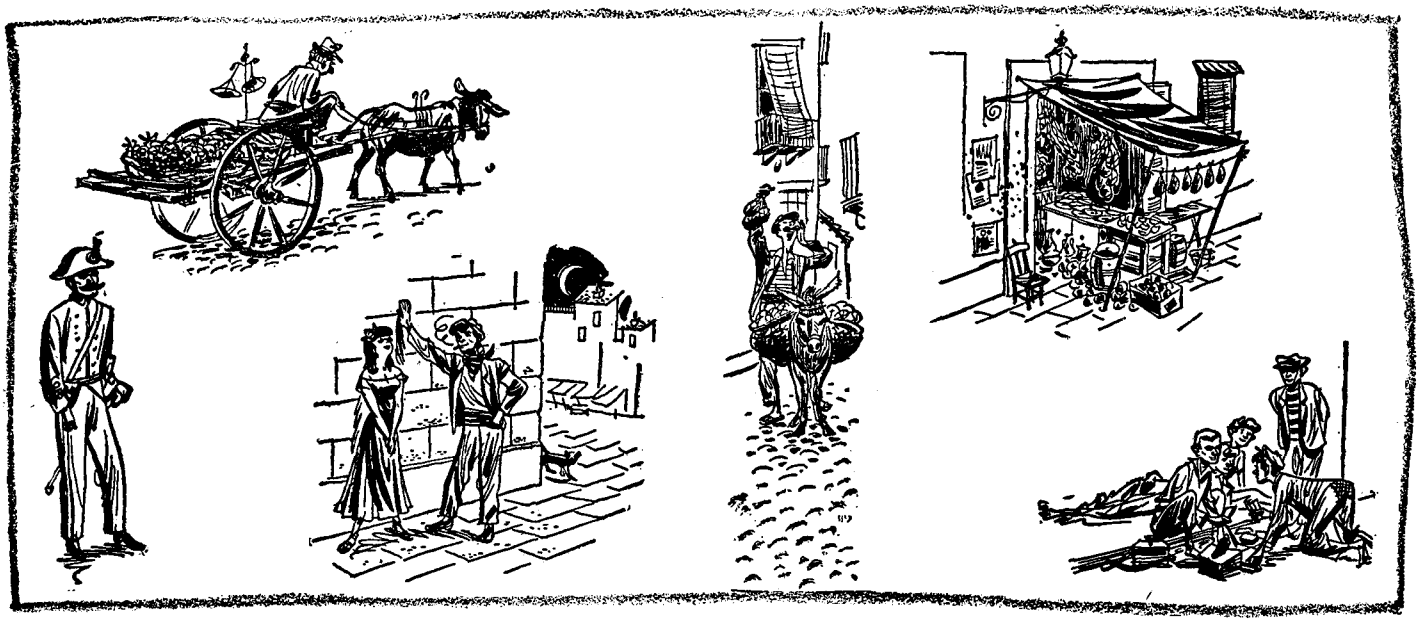

—*Illustrations by James Alexander, from "The Treasure of Naples."*

which Virginia refused to recognize; as he sits—more often lies—in his cabin above the northern side of the Falls, his solitary bouts with his jug becoming more and more frequent; as, having burned himself by falling in his own fireplace, he lies still while his leg is amputated as his old fifer and drummer march round and round the house playing martial music to keep up the courage not even yet lost. He is seen again, a broken old man but a proud one, as he shatters the sword the State of Virginia had presented to him in 1779 (after buying it second-hand "of a gentleman who had used it but little") saying, "Damn the sword! I had enough of that—a purse well filled would have done me some service!"

—*From "The Ohio," by R. E. Banta (Rinehart).*

Drink & Damnation

A DRUNKEN FIGURE went reeling past.

The evangelist pointed toward him in reckless denunciation. "Look at him, Lord! Look at him! Walking straight down the pathway to Hell, Lord! Walking straight down to eternal damnation! You hear the Devil hollering, Lord? You hear the Devil laughing and screaming? It's because he's going to get another soul, Lord! It's because he sees what's going to happen to this blind sinner! He sees him laying in the street with the whiskey bottle in his hand, Lord! He sees the police taking him off to the morgue, and laying him on the cold stones! He sees the medical students cutting him open, like he was a chicken! Do you feel them knives slicing in your liver? Maybe you're too full of rum and gin and whiskey to feel 'em now! But someday you'll feel 'em! Someday when it's too late you'll feel 'em, brother! And them knives'll be hot and burning! 'Cause they'll be the knives of the Devil a-cutting you up in Hell!"

He fell to his knees, and began to pray again.

The drunkard reeled away.

—*From "Everywhere I Roam," by Ben Lucien Burman (Doubleday).*

A Child in Absentia

TEN YEARS had gone by from the time of their marriage when on the morning of October 14, 1914, Donna Carmela suddenly stopped combing her hair in front of the mirror, shot a glance round the room to be sure that Mariuccia and Assuntina were not there and said calmly to her husband:

"Do you remember the year you were in America? A month before you came back I had a baby called Luisella."

"Then she's not mine!" shouted Don Gennaro, leaning up against the wall.

"Who said she was?" observed Donna Carmela, as nonchalantly as if she were saying hello and good-bye.

"Holy Mother of God!" exclaimed Don Gennaro, beside himself. "I'll do something about it. After all, there's such a thing as the law. I'll make a statement to the effect that I don't acknowledge her as my daughter."

Donna Carmela got up with a look of inexpressible gratitude, gave her husband a hug and said:

"Good! I've been praying Saint Vincent that you'd say those exact words! You must make out the papers right away."

Don Gennaro felt so faint that he had to stretch out on his bed and Donna Carmela proceeded to put cold compresses on his head while she peacefully told him the whole story.

—*From "The Treasure of Naples," by Giuseppe Marotta (Dutton).*

Going to Glory

THE SOUNDS from the road were quieting to a low throbbing drone of voices. Old Pine listened. "They're going now," she said. "They're going to glory and Mister Baker's marching with them."

Biggs sensed her voice about to rise. "Now don't get excited. In the morning we will start after them and you will see Mister Baker leading a big charge, or something."

Old Pine shouted, "You're damn right for once, Piggy. He's going to stride them mountains with them. I'll meet him up there and back myself against them hills and we'll fight."

Her arm leaped up. "Read that goddamn letter, Piggy. Read it to me twice."

Biggs held the letter up, cleared his throat, and read with all the feeling he could put into the note.

Old Pine's face fixed in proudness. Her chin flung up.

"Ain't it a beautiful thing, Piggy?" she shouted. "Ain't it just a beautiful thing." A big hand dabbed at her eyes.

She tossed her great head wildly, then leveled her eyes on Biggs. "He's as brave a bastard as ever come from North Carolina," she said. "And they won't born them down there until they got beards on their chin and shoot their way out with a pistol."

Biggs said, "I hope it turns out all right."

—*From "Eight April Days," by Scott Hart (Coward-McCann).*

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Drama. *Here is a final report on what has been one of the theatre's most active years, literarily speaking. Some time back we commented on two volumes of drama chit-chat by newspaper chroniclers of the Broadway stage: "Matinee Tomorrow," by the* New York Sun*'s Ward Morehouse and "Curtain Calls," by the United Press's Jack Gaver* [SRL *Nov. 12*]. *Now comes "The Theatre Book of the Year," the annual compendium of effusions of* Esquire*'s George Jean Nathan, reviewed on page 11 by the* New York Post*'s Richard Watts, Jr. . . . Samson Raphaelson, author of half a dozen sparkling comedies, discusses his trade in "The Human Nature of Playwriting," reviewed below by Arthur Miller, the author of two prize-winning tragedies. . . . Sarah Truax, the Modjeska of the Middle West early in the century, will stir the nostalgia of oldsters with her autobiographical "A Woman of Parts," another new book.*

Creation of Character and Story

THE HUMAN NATURE OF PLAYWRITING. By Samson Raphaelson. New York: The Macmillan Co. 267 pp. $4.

By Arthur Miller

THERE is probably no other field in which so many try and so few succeed as in the writing of plays. And because scientific analysis has broken so many other mysteries, the mystery of the play's nature and how to create it has brought into being shelves of books which attempt to reduce the problem to variations of a set of rules laid down by Aristotle and elaborated by Archer, Lawson, and a host of others. In the main Mr. Raphaelson has wisely desisted from rule-making and has written a book which attempts to bring to light the creative process of playwriting itself.

The book is a dialogue record of his classes with thirty young students at the University of Illinois. As a one-time student of such a class I can vouch for the typicality of the questions and the general air of enthusiastic bewilderment. It is clear that Mr. Raphaelson succeeded, as few teachers have, in imparting to neophytes a valid idea of at least the emotional sources of play material along with a clear direction toward the creation of dramatic form.

His main effort, as it should be, is the practical. He attempts to avoid generalizations which would be impossible for anyone but a long-suffering playwright to understand. The creation of character and story is not made to appear, as in most other manuals, an intellectual jigsaw puzzle, but an expression of one's own life experience. The most valuable service he has done is to make reality and life the playwright's frame of reference, and not the theatre or its alleged demands.

The result is to open up the sources of play material. And if Mr. Raphaelson's occasional lapses into rule-making are ignored, his method will lead a talented person away from the alleged "mechanics" of the craft to the origins of those necessities of the stage, namely, man's character and relations with his fellows.

When he is dealing with this process of self-examination, which is most of the time, he is vivid and suggestive. Inevitably, however, his own kind of play, perhaps unconsciously, limits him when giving particulars. On characterization he is below his own level when he says, "Go over the play and see if John's childhood emerges anywhere." If one has to go over a play looking for a character's childhood I think one must be mechanically writing a mechanical play. But he is talking only about a particular genre of Broadway vehicle when he advises, "The curtain line should be spoken by a principal character, if possible." I imagine that seventy-five per cent of the great plays pay no attention to such an idea, which is not a dramatist's notion but a star's. Banalities such as these, though numerous, are not the measure of the book. They merely attest to the fact that there is a limit to how practical one should be when answering practical questions.

Samson Raphaelson: "See if John's childhood emerges anywhere."

The important failing of the book, even from the most practical viewpoint, is its desultory consideration of the integration of character and story with the theme. Mr. Raphaelson is chary of theme because he rightly fears that most young writers lean toward expressing ideas through ideas rather than ideas through emotion. The solution, however, is not to avoid consideration of the idea-content of the play. There have been successful plays that have done this, but no fine ones.

"Universality," an aspect of characterization which Mr. Raphaelson places great store on as an entertainment value, cannot be separated from the society in which the character struggles. It cannot be understood merely as a psychological category. One's attitude toward society is, therefore, a crucial segment of characterization itself and must be examined. It is through this doorway that the world enters a play's private relationships and makes the difference between an interesting, even gripping, tale and the "classic" in which the fate of all of us is at stake. The sound of the axe destroying Chekov's cherry orchard reverberated through a nation. His heroine's tears would be merely poignant to us had they not been the tears of a whole class, a society. The theme of a play is nothing less than a statement of its historic importance or lack of importance. It must be exhaustively considered in a discussion of playwriting.

All of which does not invalidate the service this book may render talented but floundering writers. It locates the only possible throat through which the playwright speaks, and if it teaches nobody to write a play—for playwriting though learned cannot be taught—it at least illuminates the elements of which a play is made.

Arthur Miller is author of "Death of a Salesman" and "All My Sons."

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Drama on the Carpet

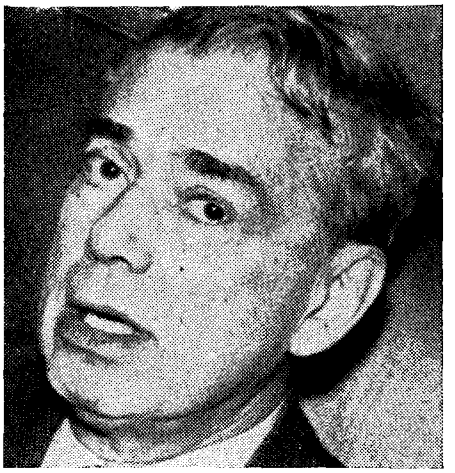
THE THEATRE BOOK OF THE YEAR, 1948-1949. By George Jean Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 363 pp. $4.

By Richard Watts, Jr.

IN HIS admirable introduction to the new Modern Library edition of Byron's "Don Juan," Louis Kronenberger notes that, while the poet doesn't actually appear in the leading role of his own work, "he insists on being almost everything else connected with the production: now dramatist and now drama critic; now heckler, now prompter, now minor actor muttering brash asides; frequently stealing a scene, unblushingly interrupting the show." If he hadn't made that exception about the leading role and had added the parts of ringmaster, lion tamer, slap-stick wielder, shooter of moths with field-pieces, tyrant, and defender of the faith, I would have thought that Mr. Kronenberger was thinking about George Jean Nathan.

It has been noted in theatrical circles that, if you want to find a really savage demolition of a play or a performance, you should go, not to the newspaper reviewers, tough as they may fondly believe themselves to be, but to a dramatist, an actor, or a producer. It may be in great part because he is not only a critic but combines the functions of dramatist, actor, producer, scenic designer, stage manager, stagehand, and prompter in his criticism that Mr. Nathan has become the most violent scorner of the theatrical works of others since Bernard Shaw, who also played all those roles when he was a practising reviewer. The great Percy Hammond used to say that drama criticism was "venom from contented rattlesnakes." Mr. Nathan's criticism comes from an extremely discontented rattlesnake, and it is putting it with fantastic understatement to say that it has made him a lot of enemies.

These enemies, I am sure, have been waiting for many years for the coming of the day when the man who has been their scourge and hair shirt would begin to show signs of losing his powers, but they will find nothing to comfort them in his latest production, "The Theatre Book of the Year, 1948-1949." The current edition of the stage's most steadily stimulating show is the seventh in its particular series, and probably not even Mr. Nathan knows how many volumes he produced before he began bringing them forth under a stock head (apparently his publisher doesn't know either, because he has omitted several I could name from the list at the beginning of the book). And he has never been in better form.



—*The Stork Club.*

George Jean Nathan—"scourge and hair shirt."

The latest offering is as vigorous, vital, hilarious, maddening, provocative, thoughtful, heedless, exciting, and infuriating as all of his works. It can be completely unfair and studiously blind. It contains all the mannerisms that can be as annoying as they are characteristic. There are innumerable times when you feel that you have been through it all before. But it is always a brilliant show and, at its best, it is an installment of the most knowing and incisive criticism of the drama that has been written in America. When I say that Mr. Nathan can be unfair, I include Nathan among the people he can be unfair to. Because, if his somewhat brash showmanship makes him readable above all other writers about the theatre, it also at times makes one forget that this is a man of rare taste and wisdom who loves the drama with a deep and heroic devotion and has been one of the greatest and best influences upon it that it has ever known in this country.

I still am inclined to think that Mr. Nathan made a mistake when he gave up writing his earlier books of criticism to adopt the pattern of an annual "Theatre Book of the Year," which must include some sort of record of every play presented during the New York season. But it really isn't important, because he never lets himself be seriously hemmed in by his formula and always writes about what he wants to, whatever the play nominally under discussion. This "Theatre Book" is certainly not to be read as an objective, factual record of a year in the American drama. But as a brilliant and impish account of the impact of that year on a singularly alive and individual intelligence, it is a pleasure.

A Star on the Road

A WOMAN OF PARTS. By Sarah Truax. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 240 pp. $3.50.

By Russell Rhodes

IN THIS season, when many drama critics, reporters, and theatrical biographers have "taken pen in hand" to imprison their view on the Fabulous Invalid, Sarah Truax's book has a quality quite its own. For what is likely the first time, a player has written intimately of the stock company theatre in America, from the declining Nineties through the first quarter of the twentieth century.

At seventy-six, Miss Truax (as Mrs. Charles Albert) is as stagestruck as ever she was sixty years ago while a pupil-teacher in the Chicago Conservatory of Music and Dramatic Art, studying voice and Delsarte, and acting with her mentor, Hart Conway, an alumnus of Augustin Daly's company, a grounding that led to her first job with Otis Skinner as Lady Castlemaine in Clyde Fitch's "His Grace de Grammont." Today, in Seattle, she is the pivot of the tributary theatre in the West, working with talented amateurs to keep the drama alive in localities where the motion picture and high cost of labor and transportation long since spelled the doom of the traveling theatre or resident stock company.

With Skinner, Miss Truax learned the art of walking the stage gracefully in the long gowns of period plays when an actress's performance hung as much on her ability to turn a train aside with an unobtrusive foot as on her line reading. Skinner, who built his interpretations of Hamlet, Shylock, or Richard III on his observations of Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett, left no doubt that he was the star. When he played "The Merchant of Venice" in the South it was billed as "Shylock, by William Shakespeare." "The Lady of Lyons," "Villon, the Vagabond," "The King's Jester"—what romantic titles!—in his repertoire also cast Miss Truax prominently. Summers she spent in stock—one way, as now, for an actor to keep employed out of season. In one company her director was Frank Craven's father; in another, James Gleason was a child walk-on. Daughter of the noble Roman in "Virginius," Parthenia in "Ingomar the Barbarian," and marriage to Guy Bates Post, a handsome juvenile in Skinner's troupe, took the author along to Sam Shubert's stock company in Syracuse, playing Camille, singing "Ben Bolt" in "Trilby" with Henry Kolker as Svengali and Brandon Tynan as sec-

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ond man, then as Lady Gay Spanker in Boucicault's "London Assurance."

Before her acting career ended, Sarah Truax had played the feminine lead in nearly 150 pieces, following such Broadway stars of the time as Viola Allen in "The Eternal City," Edith Wynne Matthison in "Everyman," Blanche Bates in "Under Two Flags," Jane Cowl in "The Gamblers," Dorothy Donnelly in "The Garden of Allah"—but always in road show facsimiles ever westward from the New York which was her heart's desire. Her nearest approach to Broadway stardom came when E. H. Sothern permitted her to relieve Margaret Illington (later Mrs. Daniel Frohman) as Huguette in "If I Were King."

Daily rehearsals at 10:00 A.M. for the following week's play, ten or twelve matinee and evening performances of the current bill and, on Sunday, the cast working for the first time with scenery and props of the new piece—that was Miss Truax's rugged routine of stock. "Sides" of forty to 100 required "winging" a part. But out of it all she became a resourceful, alert, and intelligent actress. A second marriage and motherhood were only illusions of retirement. George Tyler summoned her from amateur theatricals in Spokane for "The Garden of Allah"; there was a brief excursion into films, the Women's Suffrage Association pageant at the Metropolitan Opera House, the Cherry Lane Theatre in Greenwich Village, and her profes-

(*Continued on page* 30)

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 341

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 341 will be found in the next issue.

IHY UFQUSM VYACHM

NI ZILACPY U JFUWY

UM MIIH UM CN'M

FYZN VYBCHX. —W.

XCWEYHM.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 340

Whipping and abuse are like laudanum: you have to double the dose as the sensibilities decline.

—HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

History. *"I am convinced that the most congenial, as well as the most concrete and practical, approach to history is the biographical." So writes the editor of the Teach Yourself History Library, six of whose titles are discussed on page 13. That the book-buying public subscribes to this viewpoint is clear to anyone who has studied the relative sales of histories and biographies. Yet the biographical approach has very real limitations, as Geoffrey Bruun observes in his review of these volumes, and as Crane Brinton implies in his discussion of a new survey of the British past, Goldwin Smith's "A History of England." . . . Fresh evidence that fashions in historical interpretation change from century to century is provided by the reputation of Ivan the Terrible (see Fedotoff White's review below) and the commonly accepted ideas about the contributions of the Germans to the British race (see the Brinton review on page 14).*

Sixteenth-Century Muscovy

IVAN THE TERRIBLE. By Hans von Eckardt. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 421 *pp.* $5.

By D. FEDOTOFF WHITE

THE principal difficulty in the study of the dread Czar of Russia and the Proteus of its historiography, John IV (1530-84), lies in the scantiness of historical documents bearing on it. The turbulent years of the Time of Trouble and the great Moscow fire of 1626 had destroyed the Moscow archives to the extent that only incidental odds and ends were left for the historians to study. From Stcherbatov and N. M. Karamzin, to R. I. Wipper and the Soviet historians of the Marxist school, the image of the Czar kept on changing from that of a cruel madman to that of a great ruler, who destroyed the foundations of power of the great feudal nobles and set up a centralized national state.

Professor Von Eckardt's study is based on the conclusions of some of the later Russian historians.

One of its merits is the placing of Ivan IV and his Muscovy into the general setting of sixteenth-century Europe. The events in Muscovy are thus brought into a close connection with the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Catholic Counter-Reformation. His Ivan is a neurotic intellectual, a bookworm, a talented debater and writer, with a considerable diplomatic ability but lacking in the qualities of a military leader.

Ivan lost his father at the age of three. During his childhood the great boyar families fighting for power among themselves, swept the child "into a vortex of palace intrigue and tumults," and, as a result, he grew up to hate the great nobles vehemently.

The first period of Ivan's rule was fruitful in important reforms and military successes. The strengthening of the elements of self-government in the provinces in the administration and courts freed a large part of the population from the rapacious venality of the boyar appointees. Coupled with the conquest of the Tatar strongholds of Kazan and Astrakhan, this laid the firm foundation for Ivan's popularity with the lower classes.

Professor Von Eckardt gives a well-founded version of the often misunderstood role of the so-called *oprichnina*, the instrument Ivan used in his assault on the foundations of the boyars' power in the later part of his reign. He writes of the *oprichniki*: ". . . much of what happened in the process was not the expression of a material interest, but of the struggle of this high-handed band to impose their own way of thinking."

The ruthless destruction of the boyar economy and the great waves of terror which accompanied it shook the very foundation of Muscovy. Added to the effect of the unsuccessful war for the Baltic lands, it brought Ivan's state close to complete exhaustion. The Czar's resolute struggle for peace, in which he "showed himself thoroughly capable of political dealings in the grand style," saved the state by liquidating the war.

Ivan's strange personality is well understood and ably portrayed by Von Eckardt. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of his attempts to analyze the Polish national character and culture, or of his remarks about the Great Russian national traits. Here one hears the echoes of the age-old prejudices of the Baltic Germans, complacently vaunting their own superiority over the benighted Slavs.

The translation by Catherine Alison Phillips is excellent, but the editing is uneven.

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Teach Yourself History, Continued

PERICLES AND ATHENS. By A. R. Burn. New York: The Macmillan Co. 253 pp. $2.

CONSTANTINE AND THE CONVERSION OF EUROPE. By A. H. M. Jones. The same. 271 pp. $2.

RALEIGH AND THE BRITISH EMPIRE. By D. B. Quinn. The same. 284 pp. $2.

WARREN HASTINGS AND BRITISH INDIA. By Penderel Moon. The same. 361 pp. $2.

THOMAS JEFFERSON AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY. By Max Beloff. The same. 271 pp. $2.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE UNITED STATES. By K. C. Wheare. The same. 286 pp. $2.

By Geoffrey Bruun

THE Teach Yourself History Library, edited by A. L. Rowse, includes more than forty volumes, published or projected, each intended "by way of a biography of a great man to open up a significant historical theme." The series takes all Western history for its province but the emphasis is notably Anglocentric, one-half the proposed units dealing primarily with England, the British Empire, and the United States. In these six latest additions to the set, which range the field from the fifth century B.C. to the nineteenth century A.D., the virtues and limitations of the experiment are fairly exemplified.

Invoking the career and character of a great man as a key to his age is no innovation, and the claim that this device distinguishes the present series "from any other that has appeared" may surprise those familiar with the "Heroes of the Nations" or the more recently inaugurated "Makers of Modern Europe." "I am convinced," the editor affirms in his general introduction, "that the most congenial, as well as the most concrete and practical, approach to history is the biographical." He does not caution the reader that there are also defects in this approach, that relatively few great movements have centered about a single outstanding individual and fewer yet can be adequately projected in a single biography.

That the constructions implicit in such an approach may lead to distortion is suggested by some of the titles. To equate "Pericles and Athens" may be defensible, but to pair "Raleigh and the British Empire" strains a parallel. There was no "Great Britain" and no British Empire in Raleigh's day. The inclusion of "Chatham and the British Empire" later in the series is a lesser disjunction, but it confirms the impression that some themes are too protracted and too protean to fit readily into a biographical frame or frames.

Allowance must be made for these formal restrictions when the present volumes are taken under review. All six authors submit faithfully to the chronological and biographical pattern imposed. All open their narratives with the childhood of their eponymous hero and close with his death; all labor to clarify a major historical development without claiming omniscience for their key personality; all respect standard historical sources and conclude with a brief note on the literature of the subject. The volumes are equipped with two maps as end papers and one illustration as a frontispiece.

Inequalities of style are unavoidable in delegated work and the topics allotted cannot all be equally inviting. Periclean Athens is a glittering theme and A. R. Burn, lecturer at the University of Glasgow, treats it fittingly, linking the crises of Athenian democracy to our own times with adroit allusions. One could wish, however, that he had not included so many genealogical minutiae, unindividualized minor characters, and obscure place names.

In Constantine, miscalled the Great, Professor A. H. M. Jones, of the University of London, tackles a character less shining than Pericles and he traces the triumph of Christianity in the early fourth century with a heavier pen. Here, too, the unfamiliar names perplex. On page 84, for instance, casual readers will be ambushed by the sentence "Licinius was a parsimonious paymaster, whereas he was lavish with his soldiers." The "he" refers to Maximin, last sighted thirteen lines above. As the names of Constantine, Licinius, and Maxentius recur nine times between the pronoun and its antecedent a guileless observer may find he has lost track of the ball.

With "Raleigh and the British Empire" David B. Quinn, professor of history at University College, Swansea, illuminates brightly a checkered field. Raleigh's role in the first abortive efforts to plant an English colony in America come into sharp and relevant focus. In similar fashion, the labors of Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of British India, are thoughtfully reconstructed by Penderel Moon, sometime fellow of All Souls College and author of the perspicuous study "Strangers in India." The two volumes that deal with the United States, "Thomas Jefferson and American Democracy," by Max Beloff, and "Abraham Lincoln and the United States," by K. C. Wheare, both noted Oxford scholars, are among the best in the series. Sane, crisply written, well planned, and circumstantial, each opens with a disarming preface confessing the hesitation these British historians feel at invading well-gleaned fields of American scholarship. Their misgivings are gracefully phrased and quite unnecessary.

All these biographies, units in a presumable sequence, share a common deficiency: isolation. Where one looks for interlocking sections of a causeway one encounters solitary arches standing in a sort of historical vacuum. Each of the present volumes is a discrete unit with no internal reference or relation to any companion pieces. How these individual arches are to be formed into a bridge it is not easy to foresee, although the editor proclaims his hope "by a sufficient number of biographies to cover whole periods and subjects."

Possibly it is unjust and premature to question the purpose and plan of the Teach Yourself History Library when less than half the indicated contributions are in print. As they stand, the existing volumes would serve a teacher as useful extra assignments in a well-organized history course. But, in the absence of a general guide, coupling aids, and chronological outlines, only a most exceptional lay reader could achieve a sound historical perspective by reading any or all of them. Fully to justify its title, this series should be developed with more deliberation and a deeper respect for the historical principles of proportion and continuity.

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—*From "Other People's Lives."*

Britain from the Eolithic to Attlee

A HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By Goldwin Smith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 877 *pp.* $6.75.

By CRANE BRINTON

HERE is a modern survey of British history from the eolithic to Clement Attlee and his colleagues. Professor Goldwin Smith is a young Canadian with a name familiar to all students of the Victorian Age. He has studied at Cornell, where his namesake had so distinguished and useful a career. His book is an admirable example of contemporary professional history, addressed no doubt basically to the college student who "takes" the history of Great Britain, but still a book which the general reader interested in getting a background in depth for the understanding of current international affairs can read with profit. It will be a most valuable "refresher" for all those whose notions of British history were formed a generation ago. A lot has happened to the writing as well as to the making of British history since the great wars. One suspects that the first Goldwin Smith would hardly here recognize the England he had read about in the pages of John Richard Green.

In form and in ground covered, this survey shows how complete has been the triumph of the "new history," now hardly touched with any sense of novelty. Professor Goldwin Smith covers everything—the chronological tale of wars and politics, the social and economic analysis, the literary and artistic culture, even the "national habits." The result, as has been pointed out so often, is certainly a loss of sustained dramatic interest. You simply cannot do this sort of thing the way Parkman did his story of the rivalry between free Britain and enslaved France for the control of North America. You cannot do it for one thing because you no longer dare make such simplifications as "free" Britain and "enslaved" France; but, even though you were willing to simplify in the interests of drama, you just can't make economic and social history dramatic. There is no Mary, Queen of Scots, in the cotton business.

But there is a gain to compensate for the loss. History as Professor Goldwin Smith writes it has the scholarly virtues of fairness, rigorous checking of the facts, exclusion of the writer's own judgments of value. Professor Smith writes even of the present Labor Government without entirely giving away his own position. He is not, however, indignant and surprised at nationalization, which his namesake undoubtedly would have been. One suspects that he is just a mite left of center, but perhaps he really is above the combat, as Clio's household is supposed to be. Moreover, from history of this sort, if you do not get the excitement of plot, eloquence, and spectacle, you do get an awareness of the extreme complexity of a great state, of the interrelations of all men do and say, of the persistence, the inertia (in something like the physicist's sense of the term) that puts such definite limits on the policy of any state. You will tend to distrust any formula that presupposes a Britain totally different from the Britain whose long history is recorded here—such as a Britain reconciled to the status of a second-rate power, a Britain immediately merged in a world-state, a Britain unanimously pro-American, indeed, and most unlikely of all, a Britain unanimous about anything.

Perhaps it is the accident of this repetition of the name of Goldwin Smith, but it is difficult to read this book without finding the old problem of historical relativity rather sharply put. For right at the very beginning of this book two of the facts about British history which the first Goldwin Smith and his colleagues took for granted are quite simply rejected. The Victorians almost to a man believed that Englishmen—in contrast to Welsh, Irish, and the other unfortunate Celts—were of German blood; they believed—though there was more dispute on this point, that those institutions of democratic self-government they were so proud of originated in the German forests, and were brought over to England with the Anglo-Saxons. The second Goldwin Smith leaves almost nothing of these beliefs. The Anglo-Saxons even in the East of England did not make *tabula rasa* of the natives, as we did later with our Atlantic Seaboard red Indians; at worst, they enslaved the natives, took on their women as concubines, and merely added a strain of German to blood already mixed since paleolithic times; as for the forest democracy of the Germans, that seems now to have no standing at all.

We cannot here go on down the ages in this comparison, which would be a most interesting task. Magna Charta, for instance, looks quite different in this book from the way it looked in Victorian books. But will a third Goldwin Smith in 2025 write a British history which contradicts this one? In some respects, yes. But there will be a solid residue that survives, for in some sense history is a cumulative study. The Anglo-Saxon myth, for instance, can hardly be revived, unless in the breakup of civilization the slow but real process of accumulated knowledge we call history is lost.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 822)

W. S. MAUGHAM:
A WRITER'S NOTEBOOK

There is a nobility . . . which depends neither on culture nor breeding. . . . It may be that in the knowledge that man for all his weakness and sin is capable on occasion of such splendour of spirit, one may find some refuge from despair.

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Fiction. *The novels reviewed this week are as far apart in theme and interest as their settings in England, Scotland, France, and Utah. In "The Peaceable Kingdom" Ardyth Kennelly writes tenderly and lyrically about her grandmother, a warm-hearted and irresistible Swede who discovered that one husband was not enough for two women, but who made her separate dwelling a place of delight and enchantment for the children. Marghanita Laski's "Little Boy Lost" is a fragrant story of a Frenchman's search at the end of the war for the son whom he had not seen since the day of his birth. David Walker's book, about a manhunt in the Scotch Highlands, is on a higher level than the usual escape and pursuit story. Elizabeth Goudge's countless admirers will find her eighteenth book, an historical novel of Devonshire in Napoleonic days, as satisfying as anything she has written, and the same praise can be given to P. G. Wodehouse's expert and pleasantly silly "The Mating Season."*

Life According to the Prophet Smith

THE PEACEABLE KINGDOM. By Ardyth Kennelly. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 375 *pp.* $3.

By DALE L. MORGAN

AMONG the reasons Ardyth Kennelly gives for having written "The Peaceable Kingdom" is that "like the poem says, when I am gone O who will remember the lady of the West Countree." It is certainly her maternal grandmother she bespeaks, and superbly Miss Kennelly has seen to it that the lady shall never be forgotten. The resourceful, warm-hearted, wonderfully good-humored, altogether irresistible woman who in this novel is called Linnea Ecklund overflows the pages of the book to fill our hearts. Tragedy indeed, had there lived no granddaughter to hold her in remembrance.

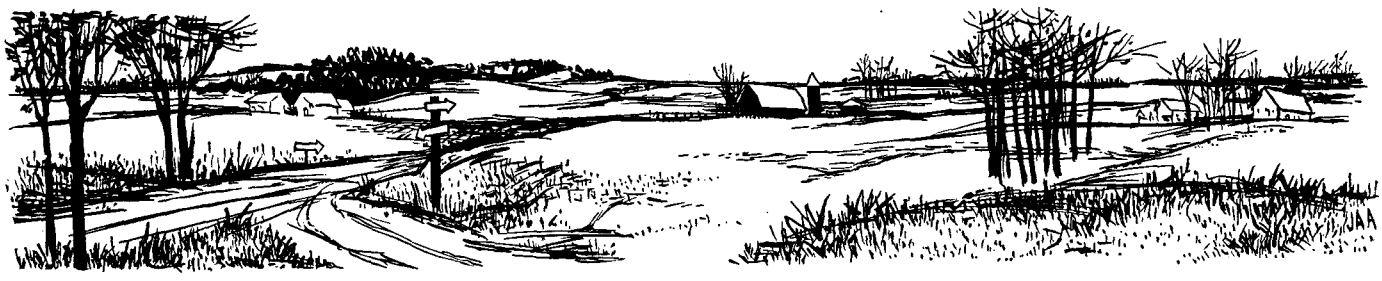
A book like "The Peaceable Kingdom" has its origin in cherished family memories, in proud silk dresses preserved in spicy chests in old attics, in well-built houses and well-kept graves. It has the unmistakable stamp of having been richly lived before ever a time came to put the living down on paper. But it takes Linnea's spiritual heir to know just how it all must have been and enable us to sit in the Ecklund kitchen drinking fragrant Swedish coffee with the comfortable assurance that the Lord never intended that the Word of Wisdom should apply to Swedes, savor with equal pleasure the exciting prospect of moving again, or run around the house in frantic haste to rescue Gertrude before she can fall after her new hat down the big hole in the backhouse. In five years I have not read a book with greater enjoyment, and the rest of my days I am going to have a fond place in my heart for the Linneas of "The Peaceable Kingdom."

The Linnea of the book was the second wife of Olaf Ecklund. Let no one think that she married in polygamy because of stern religious duty or because she had no other option. Not Linnea. Smack-dab, she fell in love with Olaf, the young tailor with the broad shoulders and deep voice who could sing like a bronze bell booming, dance a polka with the friskiness of a colt, and slide around a lady's waist an arm strong and warm. And though Linnea was not so pretty as the first wife, Sigrid, there was about her a kind of splendor that enchanted Olaf just as it will you and you and you; no wonder he was a fool about her.

As became a responsible young Mormon, Olaf tried his best to be impartial with his wives. The trouble was, as Linnea reflected in her more objective moments, God or the Prophet Joseph Smith just didn't take human nature into account when he or they thought up the idea of plural marriage. Not women's human nature, anyway. One husband just couldn't be enough to go around.

Olaf's naive idea had been that his two wives would get along like sisters; he had imagined them "strolling with their arms around each other's waist, speaking in soft voices, perhaps even singing duets together." He ended by thanking the good Lord that they lived in different wards, attended different meeting houses, and had different friends. Linnea's view, as argued to another plural wife for whom polygamy was a special consecration akin to entering a nunnery, was, "Why it's just like marriage! There ain't nothing to be heartbroke about if all you got to contend with in this life is *polygamy*!" But sensible in this as in all else, she taught her children that times were changing; when her daughters should come of age, polygamy would not be good enough for them, let them remember that!

If this were just another book about the singularity of two women sharing one man in marriage, "The Peaceable Kingdom" would have no special claim to our time, for by now there have been enough of these and to spare. What makes Miss Kennelly's novel a thing of delight is the never-failing humanness of Linnea, her children, and her friends. They are your Aunt Jane, the kids you grew up with, the neighbors up and down the street and over on the next block. In the Ecklund home, peripatetic as it is, you may revisit your own past and are granted a prevision of your grandchildren's future, for the things Miss Kennelly writes about are timeless. And of course superbly quotable. No one who reads it can resist the temptation of reading aloud some of the passages that are sheer delight and which go on quoting themselves in your mind whether or not you are able to pass them on to an appreciative audience. Miss Kennelly, this is an extraordinarily fine job. If you have another such grandmother up your sleeve, let's hear about her.



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Son-Hunt

LITTLE BOY LOST. By Marghanita Laski. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 248 pp. $2.75.

By Evelyn Eaton

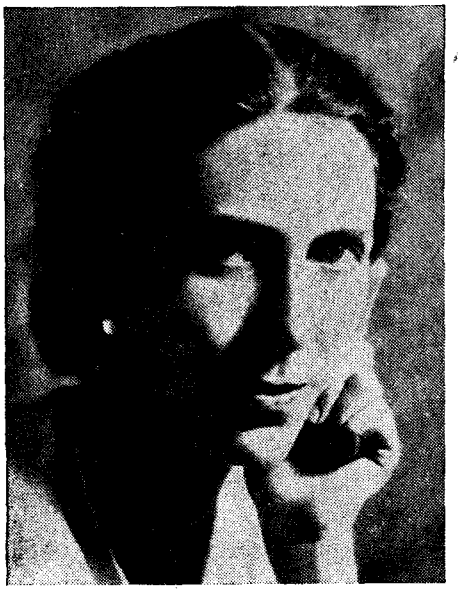
IN her first book, "Toasted English," Miss Laski proved that she could write excellent satire in good, crisp English. In her second she has gone beyond the limitations of satire. "Little Boy Lost" is a poignant novel about people who are so alive that we resent for them the scars they casually show or as casually cover. Miss Laski's theme would seem to be that unendurable things have happened to people who have endured them; that such suffering is the commonplace property of adults and children who have experienced, however physically safe they may have emerged, the last ten years in France—a subject which might have wearied minds sated with horror. But Miss Laski is an artist and this is a good book.

Hilary, who loved his French wife, Lisa, with an unusually deep and satisfying love, is separated from her by the war. Lisa worked in the Resistance, was tortured and murdered by the Gestapo. The "little boy lost" is their child, whom Hilary is trying after the war to find. There are few clues and a range of terrifying possibilities. The search is complicated by Hilary's having seen his son but once, on the day that he was born, when he had to leave Lisa and the baby in Paris to the oncoming Germans.

Hilary's tortured search, his doubts and hesitations before a child which may or may not be Lisa's baby, his instinctive craving not to have to endure the ordeal of waking a past which he has painfully obliterated so that he may live are set against the normal background of the trivialities of life. The book is full of light, beauty, even of gay laughter. Hilary is no mere embodiment of heroic grief. He is a groping, sensitive, understandable man with mental and emotional impulses and normal instabilities. He is still able to love the sights and sounds of France, to appreciate good food, to crave "a whole conversational range of shared interests," to remember "the smell of the hot Provençal grass, of expensively perfumed women in good restaurants, of the resinous wine he had drunk in Greece," and to know "that the life before him suddenly held possibilities of pleasure that he had, when envisaging it, completely ignored."

Hilary, Pierre, Madame Mercatel, the Mother Superior, the prostitute Nelly, are mixed-up living people. So

Marghanita Laski—"presence of the thing not named."



Elizabeth Goudge—"a passion for setting things right."

is the child Jean. It is hard to forget his walk to the train or the episode of the red gloves. According to Willa Cather "it is the inexplicable presence of the thing not named" that "gives high quality to the novel." It is in what she evokes but does not specifically tell that Miss Laski succeeds in creating a thoughtful, provocative book, in a mood of high suspense.

I wish that "Little Boy Lost" could be required reading for every junketing Congressman, and forcibly put into the hands of gripers, the overprivileged, or the bored. Lovers of France, the compassionate, the Gallicized among us will not need to have it put into their hands. They will buy it and try to keep it on their shelves, for this is a book which will be frequently borrowed, seldom returned.

Magic in Devonshire

GENTIAN HILL. By Elizabeth Goudge. New York: Coward-McCann. 402 pp. $3.50.

By Josephine Lawrence

A FAIRY story 400 pages long and probably too short at that to satisfy Elizabeth Goudge's large, happy public is unfolded in "Gentian Hill." It is completely incredible, even when accepted in the spirit of far-away and long ago, but it is also rich in legend and love and a beautiful passion for setting things right. This exercise of magic is the fiction writer's prerogative and I have never been able to understand why it is so often severely criticized. Miss Goudge, who may or may not be lonely and afraid, manages through her books to speak directly to many readers who are both fearful and alone; if for only a few hours she can quiet their panic with dreams, surely she has reason to be proud.

This, her eighteenth book, has in it the echoes of war, since it is set in the time of conflict between England and France, when Lord Nelson was one country's hero and Napoleon Bonaparte the other's. But there is little of battles and blood in the story and much goodness, faith, and love. The exquisite heroine, Stella, orphaned by shipwreck, is the adored foster-child of a Devonshire farmer and his wife, who surround her with security and shield her from harm. Stella is an extraordinary little girl, "born with a hurt heart," the good Doctor Crane, who gives her lessons, knows. Sensitive to every soul's hidden anguish, she is never really a child, save in years, and all her contacts are with adults. Excepting only Mr. Midshipman Anthony Louis Mary O'Connell, who is neither child nor adult, but like herself an orphan and a lad sorely in need of compassion and understanding when he deserts his ship. He finds all that he needs: a father in the doctor, a friend in the abbé, and in Stella, his wife-to-be. These two young creatures, beautiful, pathetic, and so greatly at the mercy of fate, are truly the wards of heaven in that a guardian angel awaits them at every turn. The abbé's story should not be revealed here, but, patently as it is contrived, it is in keeping. And with it the charming legend of the ruined Catholic chapel set high above the Protestant village.

The writing has the lovely flowing quality familiar to admirers of Miss Goudge. Among her most delightfully developed characters must be included the animals who play important roles in the Devonshire farm

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life. Class distinctions divide the loyal creatures into indoor and outdoor dogs and cats, a caste system Stella deplores. Hodge, the house dog; Seraphine, the house cat; Daniel, the yard dog who had a "slight mental deficiency"; the barn cats, and the doctor's horse—all are uniformly engaging and could be subtracted from the fairy tale, set down in this hard, cold world and still seem believable. That none of her human beings could pass this test is no reflection on the author's skill.

Fiction Notes

THE STORM AND THE SILENCE, by David Walker. Houghton Mifflin. $2.75. Connoisseurs of the manhunt on its higher and subtler level will find in Mr. Walker's novel a tale to please them. It pursues a simple, swiftly-moving story over some two or three tension-filled days to its climax, with a slender thread of retrospect interwoven here and there to enrich our understanding of the central figure.

The quarry is Tam Diamond, a young Scot from the slums of Glasgow. In him all his life has lurked a flaring, murderous temper, a blind thing beyond his control. The slum boyhood, the childish fury when his mother was struck by his drunken father, have contributed to it. The experience of the war, the irony by which the worst of a man is seized upon to be his great asset, has scarcely improved his discipline of himself.

We take up with Tam just as he

(Continued on page 32)

Americana. *In the two decades that Americana has been one of the liveliest branches of our letters, two sections of the country—the West and the South—have been the special favorites of writers in the genre. The outlawry of the West, depicted recently in Homer Croy's "Jesse James Was My Neighbor," is treated in more pedestrian fashion by James D. Horan in "Desperate Men," reviewed on page 18. A discussion of still another addition to the year's flood of books about California, "The Shirley Letters from the California Mines," will be found among the briefer notices this week. The South and its lost cause are celebrated in Ben Ames Williams's new edition of Mary Boykin Chesnut's "A Diary from Dixie" and in "The Robert E. Lee Reader," a product of the scissors and paste pot of Stanley F. Horn, reviewed on page 19.*

Of Men and Trees

AMERICAN HEARTWOOD. By Donald Culross Peattie. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 307 *pp.* $3.50.

DESPERATE MEN. By James D. Horan. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 296 *pp.* $4.

By Dale L. Morgan

IN WRITING "American Heartwood," Mr. Peattie has undertaken to correlate his interests as a naturalist with his passion for the American land and people. At least by intention, "American Heartwood" is an interpretation of the American people in terms of the North American sylva, worked out in many analogies of qualities held in common by certain trees and certain men.

Actually, this view is not developed with conspicuous success. As often as not, it is nothing more than a narrative device, a play upon words by a virtuoso. At times the trees disappear almost entirely from the account, as in the chapters on the Santa Fe Trail and on the vast American bison herd (curious that Mr. Peattie does not remark upon that picturesque name for buffalo chips, "buffalo timber"). Even in the chapters dealing with the Eastern forest lands, trees and men lie indifferently in the same bed, with no consummation at all of the marriage tie Mr. Peattie has pronounced with so much ceremony.

But, taking the book for what it turns out to be rather than what Mr. Peattie proposed it should be, one can read it with equal pleasure and profit. I prefer Mr. Peattie the naturalist to Mr. Peattie the historian. Saying so may be indecent exposure of my ignorance, but he is the first who ever explained intelligibly to me why trees change color in the autumn and why a tree's resplendent leaves may not be the same color two years hand-running. (No, Jack Frost has nothing to do with it.) The growth and character of a tree's heartwood, and the reasons for the great strength of wood, are other matters most entertainingly and instructively explained.

Apart from the formally informal little sketches of personalities who loom large in American history, like John Marshall, who fashioned the Supreme Court into the powerful force in our lives that it is today, Andrew Jackson, who did as much for the Presidency, or Andrew Hamilton and Roger Williams, who made vital and enduring contributions to

—From "American Heartwood."

Roger Williams—"vital and enduring contributions to our heritage of liberty."

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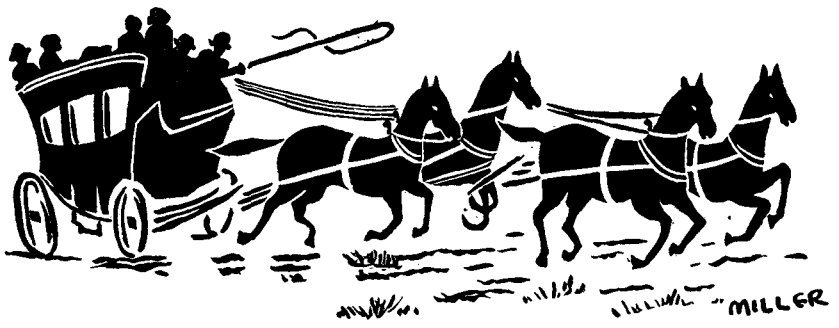

our heritage of liberty, Mr. Peattie gives us in this book other sketches which can be described only with a word made threadbare by much improvident use: they are charming.

One of these is concerned with Leif Eriksson, and the *mösurr* wood he brought back from an until-then undiscovered shore, another with a voyager of the fifteenth century who sailed over the rim of the world to find islands as green and leafy in October as the groves of Castile in spring. The live-oak "iron," which gave name to "Old Ironsides," receives graceful attention, and other chapters deal with the lost Roanoke colony, John Smith and Pocahontas, Hernando de Soto and Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, and William Penn. There is a moving account of Valley Forge, and Mr. Peattie's eye rests briefly on the mines of the Comstock, whose vitals swallowed up whole forests. A last chapter is an appreciation of the Forest Service, seen as a symbol of changing American attitudes toward the disappearing forests.

Mr. Peattie has, too, a direct word for us, the avowal of a faith. This is a country, he feels, which grew straight up from one idea, and that the best one. He has no patience for those who shake their heads over the state of its heartwood. "I feel about the United States these days very much as I feel when I look out, early in the morning, at the oak outside, many-limbed, staunchly rooted, deeply alive. I am content about its heartwood; I rejoice in the wind moving its myriad tongues."

* * *

THE curious thing about "Desperate Men" is that while the text consistently plays up the Pinkertons as the nemesis of the Western outlaw gangs, the facts as Mr. Horan develops them absolutely deny his argument. What did the Pinkertons actually accomplish in their sixteen-year fight to suppress the James gang? In western Missouri they ran into the stone wall of official indifference and outright hostility which brought to naught all their efforts to lay the James boys by the heels—worse still, three valuable operatives were killed. An armed descent on the home of Jesse's mother spectacularly backfired; Jesse and Frank James had flown the coop, and a flare which was thrown into the Samuels house and which blew up, injuring Jesse's mother and stepfather, and killing his half-brother, aroused so much popular resentment that after seventy-four years the detective agency is still defending its expedient on this unlucky night. Early in the struggle against the James gang Pinkerton operatives killed one hanger-on and jailed another, and that is about the sum total of their achievement. What finished the James and Younger gangs was not the "terrifying pressure" from the Pinkerton organization but the outlaws' disastrous mistake in going outside home territory to tackle the Northfield Bank in Minnesota, and even more importantly, the changing social milieu, the rising intolerance of the Middle Border's lawless mores, which led inexorably to the calculated assassination of Jesse in 1882.

The fundamental thesis of Mr. Horan's book thus hardly stands up. He is on better ground at the end of his narrative, when he points out the analogy between the relations of the outlaws with the community and the breeding of a better strain of deer because of the presence in their midst of a vicious cougar—"the outlaws of the Middle Border and the Far West helped to develop the same forces that finally destroyed them. Certainly the outlawry and violence did point up the corruptness of some law-enforcement officers and the cowardice of others, and finally awakened the communities to appoint better men to protect them." He might have added that both on the Middle Border and in the Far West the development of the social institutions we call civilization resulted in an environment finally inimical to the kind of destructive individualism represented in the activities of the gangs.

Having thus dismissed the book's misleading emphasis upon the Pinkertons (who, however, certainly deserve a book of their own, for in the years before a Federal Bureau of Investigation existed they pioneered in the development of criminological techniques and served as a coordinating agency for inadequate, because localized, law-enforcement activities), we can say more appreciatively that "Desperate Men" is as good a condensed account of the James and Younger gangs and of the Wild Bunch as now exists. It has a more cold-eyed realism about Jesse James than Mr. Croy's recent study of him and comes to more unsparing judgments, though in my view Mr. Horan displays the common failing of reading back into the boy what the man became.

There are occasional misstatements as, for instance, declaring Tom McCarty and Matt Warner to be one and the same, and some deficiencies in background, notably the complex issue between the big stockmen and the grangers and "rustlers" in Wyoming, a broader view of which is developed in Dee Linford's contribution to the recent "Rocky Mountain Cities." Mr. Horan also shows a tendency to set forth as "undoubted truth" what from the evidence adduced is only a possibility, or at best a probability. In the main, however, his is a sensible, well-integrated, and entirely readable account of an American phenomenon.

Truth

By May Sarton

NOT visible
After all
Through a glass table,
Air, or crystal
Of open window,
Transparent door,
But less, or more—
A prism, maybe,
Now blue, now green,
And what you see
I have not seen.
For change the eye
And what was true
Becomes a lie:
My green, your blue.
For who can tell
Just what was said?
None hears it all:
Your blue, my red.
The human truth
Is hard to sift,
Alack, forsooth,
Is apt to shift.
Facet by facet,
Never vicarious,
Definite, tacit,
The light is various.
My truth, your lie,
My lie, your truth.
See eye to eye?
Alack—forsooth—

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The Journal of the Confederacy

A DIARY FROM DIXIE. By Mary Boykin Chesnut. Edited by Ben Ames Williams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 572 pp. $5.

By ALFRED HOYT BILL

February 15th, 1861. . . . On the train, just before we reached Fernandina, a woman called out: "That settles the hash!" Tanny touched me on the shoulder and said: "Lincoln's elected." "How do you know?" "The man over there has a telegram." Someone cried: "Now that the black radical Republicans have the power I suppose they will brown us all." . . . I have always kept a journal . . . but from today forward I will write more.

SO BEGINS Mary Boykin Chesnut's revealing and fascinating record of life in the Southern Confederacy; and she was as good as her word, writing in fifty journals a total of nearly 400,000 words, down to the last passionate line amid the ruin that the Federal soldiers had made of her home at Camden, S. C., four and a half terrible years later:

> What is the matter? Enough! I will write no more.

Born a Boykin of South Carolina, she was married at seventeen to James Chesnut, Jr., son of a father reputed to be the owner of a thousand slaves, United States Senator from South Carolina from 1859 until shortly before the outbreak of the war, colonel and aide-de-camp to President Davis, and later a general in the Confederate Army. Generous, courageous, witty, wise, and critical in the best sense of the word, she was not only the personification of all that was best in the South of her time but, in her thinking, far ahead of most of her contemporaries, men or women, in the North or the South. And all of her best she put into her diary, for she wrote without fear or favor.

Of the earlier version of her journal—some 150,000 words, published in 1904—an elderly Southern gentleman of the old school remarked to me many years ago that it was well that it had been pruned so judiciously or about half the gentlemen of the South would have been staring at each other over the sights of dueling pistols. There were, indeed, hints of prudent suppressions. But now that her work appears very nearly in its entirety, admirably edited by Ben Ames Williams, it proves to be no chronicle of scandal. What the diarist saw, and saw so clearly, she put down without malice and generally, consciously or unconsciously, because the happening contributed to her picture of her time. About herself she was equally unsparing:

> Mrs. Chesnut [her mother-in-law] was bragging to me one day —to me a childless wretch—of her twenty-seven grandchildren. . . . What of me! God help me, no good have I done . . . with the power I boast of so, the power to make myself loved.

Of what was suppressed in the earlier book her feminism and her hatred of slavery are most striking in the new volume. Like Robert E. Lee, she saw slavery as a greater curse to the white man than to the black:

> I wonder if it be a sin to think slavery a curse to any land. . . . Like the patriarchs of old, our men live all in one house with their wives and their concubines. . . . Any lady is ready to tell you who is the father of all the mulatto children in everybody's household but her own. Those she seems to think drop from the sky. My disgust sometimes is boiling over. Thank God for my countrywomen, but alas for the men!

The rule by which she wrote was the perfect one for the diarist. "I write," she warns her reader more than once, "current rumor. . . . I write down all I hear; and the next day, if I hear that it is not so, then I write down the contradiction too." And therein lies the charm and value of her narrative. One gets the feel of the time as if one were living it: the joy over victories that were never won, the grief and terror of defeats that never happened.

One senses the fashionable, house-party atmosphere of the Spotswood Hotel in the June of 1861, where ladies intrigued against each other to get arms and uniforms for their husbands' regiments, and Mrs. Davis ran about lobby and corridors in her handsome evening dress collecting statesmen and generals for an impromptu meeting of her husband's cabinet. One sees "stodgy old Richmond" become "fast enough for anybody" as the war goes on. One shares in the sumptuous suppers at the Chesnuts', the Senator Semmeses', and the Iveses' in the winter between Gettysburg and Cold Harbor, while something close to starvation has begun to stalk the streets outside. And one hears the feet of Jefferson Davis, grief-stricken by the accidental death of his little son, as he tramps the floor overhead the whole night through.

It is hardly too much to say that what Samuel Pepys's diary is to the reign of Charles II, Mary Boykin Chesnut's is to the Confederacy. To thousands now and in years to come it will be a fascinating source of information, an invaluable aid to the understanding of a great period, and a lasting delight.

Alfred Hoyt Bill is author of "The Beleagured City," a history of Richmond during the Civil War.

Americana Notes

THE ROBERT E. LEE READER, edited by Stanley F. Horn. Bobbs-Merrill. $5. Mr. Horn calls this compilation "in no sense an anthology," but it is difficult to describe it as anything else. It is a compilation of writing about (and sometimes by) Lee, arranged in chronological sequence, with the intent of producing, in Mr. Van Horn's words, a "mosaic portrait." Of the seventy-six titles listed in the bibliography, sixty-one were published after Lee's death, and thirty-five of these during the present century. In an apparent effort to avoid peppering the text with dates, italics, and footnotes, the citations are assembled by short title at the end of the text, with full titles appended in the succeeding bibliography—a somewhat confusing arrangement. A brief critical appraisal of each source would have been valuable. Whether Mr. Horn accomplishes his design "to present a full-length portrait of Robert E. Lee by means of extracts selected from the writings of many who had taken the Confederate commander as their subject" is something the reader must decide for himself. To this reader it did not seem that the por-

(*Continued on page* 33)

The Mole to Its Child

By Georgie Starbuck Galbraith

MY SON, we burrow underground
Through cold and damp and dark.
The lot to which our race is bound
Is harsh indeed. Yet mark
That though we are by nature blind,
Yet heaven favors moles.
For of all creatures God designed,
Only the moles have souls.

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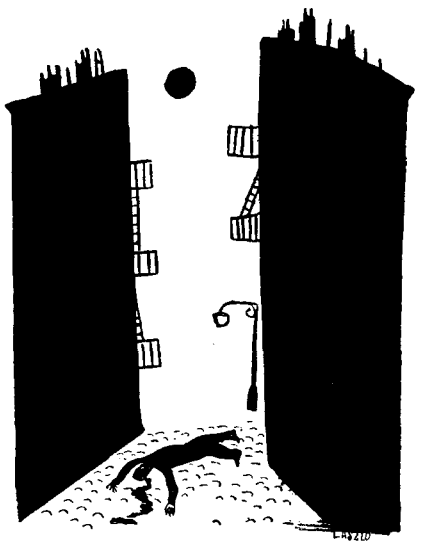
Most Deserving Murders of 1949

JUDGE LYNCH

IT USED to be said of Londoners—most likely still is—that they enjoyed the annual Christmas Pantomime because they could be sure they would hear the same old jokes that they had laughed at since childhood. The same, to our jaundiced eye, is true of television. It's amazing how long the old vaudeville gags and skits remain laughable—and how often they are used. Which is a long way of getting around to the fact that the detective-story mixture for 1949 was very much as before. Rarely has there been a more static twelve-month in whodunit history. There were a few promising newcomers, writers "to be heard from," but no bright new stars. The old-timers were in there pitching with the same control and change of pace that distinguished their performances in earlier years. But none of them did anything especially distinguished. Nineteen hundred forty-nine was a "safe" year in mystery annals. With a few exceptions—which fooled nobody—the output was workmanlike and entertaining. But there were mighty few titles that engendered many lusty cheers. About the only one that

affected the Judge that way was "The Screa—" —but that's not quite fair. The book in question was published in December, and the last good yarn one has read sometimes seems to be the best. So the Judge has gone back over the year's output and checked those books that particularly entertained him. Here they are:

"Head of a Traveller," by Nicholas Blake (Harper, $2.50), perhaps the best British yarn of the year. "Not Negotiable," by Manning Coles (Doubleday, $2.25), an upper-brackets Tommy Hambledon story and a shade better than the other Hambledon yarn, "Diamonds to Amsterdam," which appeared later in the year. "Walk the Dark Streets," by William Krasner (Harper, $2.50), a grim affair and not for the queasy, but extremely effective and well written. Definitely un-grim, in fact, delightfully wacky was "The Gun in Daniel Webster's Bust," by Margaret Scherf (Doubleday, $2.25), and even wackier, although not so soundly plotted, Richard Wormser's "The Hanging Heiress" (Mill, $2.50). The Judge echoes the published (in advts.) statement of Mr. C. Fadiman that the drinking sequences in "What a Body," by Alan Green (Simon & Schuster, $2.50), are among the funniest in fiction, but much of that tale left him rather cold: altogether too cute. The year saw the first new novel by Raymond Chandler in several years. Funny thing about that excellent item—"The Little Sister" (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50). You read it and you recognized Philip Marlowe and you fell under the Chandler spell of epigram and terse, brutal treatment of the lingo—but it seemed as if you had read it all before, and not long ago. Then you realized that there had been so many good carbon copies of Chandler in the last five-six years that when the real McCoy came along it seemed reminiscent. Which isn't so. Chandler, for the Judge's pelf, is still the unsurpassed swift-tough-literate mystery-monger. The looniest title of the year was "The Girl with the Hole in Her Head"—which turned out to be strictly true and decorated a first-class story. In the English ranks the runner-up to the Blake opus mentioned above was undoubtedly Michael Innes's "The Case of the Journeying Boy" (Dodd, Mead, $2.50). That brilliant job was more in the suspense than in the straight detective-story field, which leads up to a mention of the Judge's favorite suspense story of the year, "The Blue Ice," by Hammond Innes (Harper, $2.50). In the suspense field may also be listed two novels not generally included in the criminal category—"Shadow of a Hero," by Allan Chase (Little, Brown, $3), and "Mist on the Waters," by F. L. Green (Harcourt, Brace, $3). There was a remarkably good Ngaio Marsh story, "A Wreath for Rivera" (Little, Brown, $2.75), the customary Agatha Christie—"The Crooked House" (Dodd, Mead, $2.50)—and the best Ellery Queen story in several years, "Cat of Many Tails" (Little, Brown, $2.75). The 1949 Rex Stout story about Nero Wolfe and Archie was also above average—"The Second Confession" (Viking, $2.50). One of the Judge's favorites, Hilda Lawrence, was represented by a brace of long-shorts—"Duet of Death" (Simon & Schuster, $2), both good and trickily presented. The outstanding volume of shorts for



the year was, as usual, "The Queen's Awards"—although a little too much on the *aficionado* side to please all readers. And that brings us down to the story which began this listing. Its full title is "The Case of the Screaming Mimi," by Frederic Brown (Dutton, $2.50)—and for those readers who can take 'em tough, shocking, and surprising this is tops. In spite, we may say, of some distressingly cute writing.

With a couple of precincts missing, it looks at the moment as if the total number of detective stories published during 1949 would be in the vicinity of 170. Almost all of these were full-length novels. There were about half a dozen volumes of factual stuff—of which the Judge recalls most favorably "Crimes That Shook the World," by Richard Hirsch (Duell, Sloan & Pearce, $2.75). Six volumes of short stories also appear in the total. About those newcomers mentioned in our first paragraph—the most promising of the lot seems to be Dorothy Salisbury, whose "The Judas Cat" (Scribner's, $2.50) was above average. And there is one story coming up in early 1950 that should be a knockout if it's half as good as its title. It's called "And When She Was Bad She Was Murdered."

Judge Lynch conducts SRL's *The Criminal Record department.*

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The World in 365 Days

YEAR 1949. *Edited by Baldwin H. Ward. Los Angeles: Year, Inc.* 192 *pp.* $5.

By JOHN T. WINTERICH

RUTH STEINHAGEN, Georgia Neese Clark, Luman Ramsdell, Jeanne Laird, Richard H. Crowe, Martha Beck, Kathy Fiscus, Howard Unruh—they were all nationwide page-one names, some of them for days and weeks, during 1949. How many of them can you associate with the events that put them there? What disaster struck at Effingham, Ill.; at Gambier, Ohio? What was "Operation Haylift"? Who was "Gorgeous Gussie"?

These queries indicate the kind of nuisance you can make of yourself if you are looking through a copy of "Year 1949" in the same room with somebody who is trying to read something else. There are picture books and picture books, but "Year 1949" (second in a series which, one hopes, will run on and on) is in a class by itself. The jacket calls it "the dramatic annual record of current pictorial history—every important world event—700 pictures, 70,000 words—fully indexed for convenient, lasting future reference." This description is accurate. The index, for instance, is detailed and intelligently cross-referenced. This is a book to use as well as enjoy.

Roughly half of "Year 1949" is devoted to "National Affairs" and "World Affairs," about evenly divided. The other half is given over to "The American Scene"—business, aviation, travel, education, religion, disasters, crime—twenty-five categories altogether. Sports get twelve pages, the arts (fine arts, music, books, drama, awards) twelve pages. That is a bigger break for the arts than you are likely to get in your week-day newspaper.

"Year 1949" has almost as many editors as *Time*. Baldwin H. Ward is editor and he has been assisted by, or has assisted, a four-man editorial board, ten editorial associates, and two art editors. They have done a fine job in fashioning this frozen newsreel. Crisis becomes vivid and intimate, for example, when the Indian tension is brought home by the reproduction of two signs, one reading "Drinking Water for Muslims" and the other "To Let for Hindus. Apply Within." The book doesn't merely remind—it informs. This reviewer, who probably doesn't get around as much as he should, had not previously known that the makers of Miracloth, "the revolutionary, non-woven cloth for all housework, that rinses clean and fresh," took a full page in the *Chicago Tribune* last February which was printed *on Miracloth*. In other words, you extracted the page, rinsed it, and the type disappeared. This one stunt cost Miracloth $40,000, but it now has a quarter-page for nothing in "Year 1949," plus this *SRL* notice, also for nothing.

Progress is reported on many fronts and the camera records it. Southern California (naturally) now has self-service filling stations. A snore-preventer "aims at curing" the nation's 40,000,000 offenders—who made the count? A German has come up with a perpetual-motion machine. Bing Crosby's invention-center has produced the Breatholator, which will enable baritones to eat onions and still circulate in the best society. And some innocent *thinks* he has hit upon a device to prevent keys from dropping to the bottoms of ladies' handbags. Ha, ha.

Two suggestions for Mr. Ward and crew: If dates could be inserted in captions inconspicuously (*10/3*, for instance), the referential value of "Year" would be measurably heightened. (This, admittedly, is not always possible—one picture can cover a lot of time.) And the blank "Personal and Family Records" page could readily be dispensed with—it is the only touch of corniness.

—*James Burke-Graphic House.*

Communist troops overrun China.

—*INP.*

Veterans picket "peace" rally in New York.

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SRL: Unfair to Literature?

THE NATION magazine, through its literary editor, Margaret Marshall, has accused *The Saturday Review* of being "unfair to literature." Behind that indictment is the following bill of particulars:

1. *The Saturday Review* has so far failed to publish a letter circulated by Mr. John Berryman denouncing the articles by Robert Hillyer and the supporting editorials on the Bollingen-Library of Congress Award to Ezra Pound. *The Nation* believes that *SRL* was high-handed, evasive, and specious in its decision not to publish this letter.

Mr. Berryman's letter, containing seventy-two signatures, was sent to *The Saturday Review* only *after* it had been included in a pamphlet condemning our position published by *Poetry Magazine*, of Chicago. We had learned of the existence of the letter prior to its publication in *Poetry* through a number of writers who had refused to lend their names to it. Mr. Berryman sent the letter to *SRL*, "urgently requesting" its publication here. We asked for a fairly full statement explaining the background of the letter. We thought it only fair, for example, that mention should be made of the fact that many writers refused to sign. We asked Mr. Berryman, in good faith, to acknowledge this fact and to include such names. This he refused to do.

Mr. Berryman's letter came to us many weeks after the Hillyer controversy on the letters page had been formally closed by popular request. In all, *SRL* published ninety-four letters on the subject; toward the end the new arguments were virtually exhausted. There was nothing in the Berryman letter that had not been aired before.

2. *The Nation* contends that Mr. Hillyer and *SRL* believe that "poetry which the 'common man' cannot understand is undemocratic." No such statement has been made by Mr. Hillyer or the editors.

3. *The Nation* asserts we are against modern poetry because it is difficult. Not true. We are as opposed to the watering-down of literature as we are to coterie-literature. There is a distinction here which Miss Marshall may have failed to discern: the distinction between poetry which is difficult and poetry which is obscurantist. Even here, we entertained no objection to the publication of poetry which was not readily comprehensible even by students of poetry. What we did object to was the implied contention of the obscurantist school to the effect that if the public could read it, it probably wasn't poetry.

If *The Nation* wishes to know what it *is* we are against, we can be fairly explicit. We are against obscurantism masquerading as art-for-art's sake. We are against cults which profess to hold the exclusive keys to the literary kingdom. We are against cultural snobbery. We are against the mutual-admiration-and-benefit-society approach to criticism and literature under which members enjoy special privileges and immunities, and write blurbs and prefaces for each other and review each other's books. We are against ganging-up, whether by representation in such important bodies as the Fellows of the Library of Congress, or by a program of denunciation of non-conformists.

4. *The Nation* claims that *SRL* is widening the rift between the artist and public, and, indeed, that we are "pitting" one against the other. Based on this interpretation of what we said, we are afraid that Miss Marshall has actually reversed our true position. It is precisely because criticism by coterie has driven a wedge between poet and public that *SRL* published its articles and editorials. Our contention, in fact, was that certain poets were writing for each other, reflecting the "public-be-damned" attitude that is apparently central in their thinking. Few things have contributed more to the rift between writer and public, for example, than the Bollingen-Library of Congress Award to Ezra Pound.

What is particularly galling to the members of this school is the fact that, as a result of Mr. Hillyer's articles, the Bollingen-Library of Congress Award has been discontinued. This has resulted in the charge of philistinism and Fascism against *The Saturday Review*. Charges of this sort can be answered only by the readers of a magazine and not by its editors.

In Miss Marshall's article and in much of the opposition now being rallied against *The Saturday Review*'s position, the core center of the controversy has been largely forgotten. If the Bollingen Award had been a private matter, no questions would have been raised. The main question, as we see it, is whether a private group of poets can utilize the prestige of the American Government to advance its own school.

—N. C., H. S.

Falling Water

By Raymond Holden

THIS is a world for ears and eyes
Making us calm and therefore wise
And piteous toward the questioning words
Which fly about in us like birds.
Cool down the rock's frost-cloven stair
The river flings its shining hair.
The rainbow revel of its fall,
Enduring and ephemeral,
Flows and yet leaves a flood behind
As does the torrent of the mind.
The water's moves are motionless—
A trick of its impalpableness—
And ripe with music is its noise
Its very tumult a vast poise,
Such poise as in the reason's flood
Were love, the balance of the blood,
The liquid of man's solid will,
The soul in motion, standing still.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Taylor Caldwell

SIR: I have read with deep interest the replies to my letter in *SRL* Nov. 12, in which I urged that there be an end to hatred and intolerance in America. It is very disheartening to discover that the writers of letters disagreeing with me seem to be educated and intelligent persons, for I had long held the naive belief that hatred was either the sole possession of the illiterate or those who had private axes to grind. If people like the readers of *The Saturday Review of Literature* can repeat canards and half-truths, what is the state of mind of millions less endowed with intelligence and less dintinguished?

Only a victim of cruelty and intolerance can understand what it means to be attacked simply because one belongs to a certain religion or to a certain race. The very sound of hatred and intolerance arouses in me bitterness and sadness and disgust. The very word "minority" is unendurable to me. There are not, or should not be, "minorities" in America. "Minorities" and their "problems" are created by "majorities," and upon "majorities" rests the guilt of any suffering endured by their victims. It must be an evil thing to know that you have caused a fellow man pain or fear because he is weaker than you and more vulnerable. If there is an unpardonable sin, this is it.

I have read Paul Blanshard's "American Freedom and Catholic Power." Little as I know about the Roman Catholic Church, I can refute, or quote against, almost every page in that book. Where he cites one priest I can cite another priest to the absolute contrary. Where he repeats the statement of one Catholic "authority" I can repeat another which nullifies the first. There are as many differences of opinion, politics, and beliefs among the Roman Catholics as there are among Protestants and Jews. Under democratic government it is impossible for any one religion or race to "seize power" over all the rest of us, even if it wanted to. The bogey-man, therefore, exists only in the minds of those who believe in him or want to believe in him.

As an antidote to "American Freedom and Catholic Power" I urgently suggest the reading of that fine book "Punishment Without Crime," by Solomon A. Fineberg. They should be read together. It is the democratic way to hear all sides of the question. It is cruel to denounce the accused without letting him have his day in court, and it is un-American.

TAYLOR CALDWELL.

Eggertsville, N. Y.

Query Answered

SIR: J. J. Jones [*SRL* Nov. 12] wants to know why it is that Catholics should practise a policy which appears to him to be unfriendly or even hostile towards other religions. There is no unfriendliness or hostility. We are merely sure of our ground, that is all. We know the truth and practise the truth. We understand the word of God and are guided accordingly. We are not unfriendly towards other religions, but they are in error. There can be no error in religion; therefore Catholicism is right; therefore I am a Catholic. It is the duty of the right to uphold its cause against the wrong.

JOHN CARUSO.

Boston, Mass.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"Are you sure that there is no danger involved in this process, M. Daguerre?"

Einstein's Autobiography

SIR: It was with deep interest but not too much understanding that I read Albert Einstein's "Notes for an Autobiography" [*SRL* Nov. 26]. Although the material is less an autobiography than an essay on the development of Einstein's special field, and his contribution to it, his confining himself to that phase of his life shows an innate modesty which, unhappily for us laymen, seemed to be the result of the introspective question: "Who would be interested in anything about me except so far as it relates to the cause of my fame, physics?"

LEON YUDKIN.

Washington, D. C.

SIR: You are deserving of the highest literary compliments for publishing Einstein's essay. This memoir will stand with those of the giants—Helmholtz, Maxwell, Kirchoff, Euler, Newton. And like Newton, Einstein would be the first to admit that if he saw further it was because he stood on the shoulders of giants.

JULIUS SUMNER MILLER.

New Orleans, La.

SIR: "Notes for an Autobiography," by Albert Einstein, is worth the price of the year's subscription. Of course, 90 per cent of your subscription list would die of starvation if it had to rely for nourishment on this type of reading; but I venture that you can well afford to devote 10 per cent of your space to that 10 per cent of your readers who will have appreciated this article.

EDWARD E. AVERILL, JR.

Omaha, Neb.

News

SIR: I am reading with considerable interest your "Even Good News Is News" department (that is, I hope it will become a department, appearing regularly).

The September *UN Newsletter* contained one statement in the Annual Report for 1948-49 made by Trygve Lie which I think is worth reams of paper spent on reporting "socially" important marriages or sensational but unimportant murder or divorce trials. In this item Mr. Lie is quoted as reporting that the U. N. has succeeded in "either preventing or ending wars involving *five million people.*"

This seems to me a truly breath-taking feat and yet I did not find any report of it in my local newspapers, let alone the headlines it deserved. For the U. N. to have done this in the past year, even if it had accomplished none of the other worth-while (but un-headlinish) activities of such agencies as WHO and UNESCO, would have been worth, and more than worth, its whole budget, in my opinion.

JOAN W. LYON.

St. Louis, Mo.

"Plot for an Epoch"

SIR: As a follower of science-fiction, I have come across the theme of using a common enemy to unite the world a number of times, a theme suggested in "Plot for an Epoch" [*SRL* Dec. 3]. A basic one was "Film

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of Death," from *Astounding Science Fiction* March 1948, by J. Scott Campbell. In this case the danger was in the form of a gigantic globewide shortage of water. With the solution came world peace. Another was "Over the Top," by Lester Del Ray, *ASF* November 1949. In it the first rocket to reach Mars became stranded there and in rescuing its pilot the earth found the solution to its problems. One of the best was "Unite and Conquer," by Ted Sturgeon, from the same magazine October 1948. Besides its very apt title it was an excellent story dealing with the potential harm that came with a space-ship fleet from outer space. In it, though, your group of scientists was replaced by a single person. I think his remark at the end of the story when the successful hoax was finally admitted is very good. "Great day in the morning, he's right. What'll they make of me—a saint or a blood-red Satan?"

There were a few others too, not as good though as these. I do recall one particular one which is almost the same as "Unite and Conquer" except that its author employs a group of scientists the way you suggested. With radar they bounce messages off the moon so that it seems some people from space are sending them and then they blow up some worthless mountain in Tibet with an atomic bomb. The end is the obvious. . . . My nomination for the best author to do the job would be either George R. Stewart, Lawrence O'Donnel, or John W. Campbell, Jr. In fact, I'd enjoy reading the versions of all three. I'm sure each approach would be so different from the next that it would be an excellent experiment in writing.

Keep up the increasing number of articles and reviews on science fiction. It's an up-and-coming field, and worthy of real attention.

FRANK SIMON.

Medford, Mass.

Concerning Self-Help Books

SIR: The import of Fredric Wertham's "The Air-Conditioned Conscience" [*SRL* Oct. 1] seems to be: All books addressed to the public on the subject of how to adjust themselves to their environment must fail in their purpose. This is because maladjusted people are simply the products of their environments, and their salvation will duly come when those who may consider themselves unafflicted rise up in a burst of social consciousness and create a more ideal environment for them.

While anyone could undoubtedly find much to criticize in any of these self-help books, it certainly cannot be true that they fail utterly, for they contain much wisdom and truth. And there must be many rational and sincere readers who are able to put to good use some of the things they learn from these books.

DOUGLAS E. COOPER.

Syracuse, N. Y.

SIR: I can easily conceive a lively and readable satire on some of the self-help books, but that was far from what we got. It was ill-tempered and undiscriminating. The author's slip showed in his evident preoccupation with social or political change rather than psychological help to those who want it. As if you could alter people's competence, happiness, and adjustment just by rearranging the furniture!

The first proper study of mankind is man; the social scene comes second. Man is always more important and decisive than his tools or his social scenery, and if self-help books are

being read, it is distinctly a good omen, as surely as it was a century ago when Emerson was writing.

J. GEORGE FREDERICK.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Dr. Wertham complains that the effect of these peace-of-mind books on many people will be to encourage them to "hurry to the nearest psychoanalyst," coupling this with the statement: "As if in this day and age, when mental-hygiene clinics have waiting lists filled up for a year in advance, people still need to be 'enlightened' in this respect."

Now, I am only a layman, and therefore it is with considerable diffidence that I challenge the statements of a doctor whose work in the field of psychiatry has been as outstanding as that of Dr. Wertham. But it seems to me that he is indulging in "social vacuum" thinking when he deplores the arousing of our people to an awareness of the need for psychiatric assistance. How, in a democracy, are we going to get public funds for more mental-hygiene clinics unless the people press for them? And how are the people going to be encouraged to press for them unless as individuals they are aroused? It seems odd of him to say that we don't "need to be 'enlightened' in this respect" when the fact that we don't have enough clinics attests to our apathy, not our enlightenment.

JUNE R. BINGHAM.

Scarborough, N. Y.

SIR: Dr. Wertham's article on the "Air-Conditioned Conscience" reveals, through the pen of an expert, the hocus-pocus which millions of the American people have accepted as valid for too long a time. It is the fashion these days to major in introspection and to capitalize on what is wrong with us. All we need is to have our mental ills cured, and we will have "peace-of-mind"! Bona fide psychologists and psychiatrists are at war against this unfortunate tendency of the American public mind and against the publications growing out of it.

CHARLES E. MARTIN.

Seattle, Wash.

SIR: Letters taking issue with "The Air-Conditioned Conscience" have been surprisingly few compared with the enthusiastic agreements. A leading publisher wrote me that the article will be "certainly useful when considering manuscripts"; a minister wrote that he had quoted it in a sermon; a reader wrote of the "tremendous amount of relief" he got from it.

Suppose I take my cue from Mr. Frederick, who cites Emerson, and let Emerson answer for me. What *he* wrote was great literature, and not what an editorial in *The Catholic World* (discussing "The Air-Conditioned Conscience") calls "the syrupy soul-cure literature of the drugstores." Emerson would not have approved of our solace-for-sale books for adults, any more than he would have liked our sadism-for-sale comic books for children. The great popularity of these books would probably have annoyed him to the extent of repeating his statement that "people do not deserve to have good writing, they are so pleased with bad." As he put it, "we read books in the instinctive faith that they will reveal us to ourselves," and that is where the peace-of-mind books fail, although some of their details may be right.

Emerson did not advise that we cultivate our ego against the static background of a fixed environment, but called for men to be "contented and contenting" in a "society [that] undergoes continual changes." He would have been impatient with some of the ingenious psychoanalytic assumptions which peace-of-mind books try to inflate into a practical way of life. For he knew that the "ground on which people can live is truth; the real with the real; a ground on which nothing is assumed." To those who have learned from the don't-worry books how not to worry about other people, he would probably have applied his phrase "uncomfortable egotism." As for peace of mind itself, he wrote that "nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles"—and in our time one of the principles, I think, is that lasting psychological help is not possible without some preoccupation with social conditions (which, whether or not they make people sick, certainly do make them sicker). Individual psychoanalysis is good for neuroses and dreams, but as Emerson said, "the existing world is not a dream, and cannot with impunity be treated as a dream."

As for enlightenment of the public on the need for psychiatric assistance, that has passed the saturation point where enlightenment has become propaganda and propaganda has become advertising. Now we need, first, not more funds, but the proper use of them; not more education, but more action.

FREDRIC WERTHAM, M.D.

New York, N. Y.

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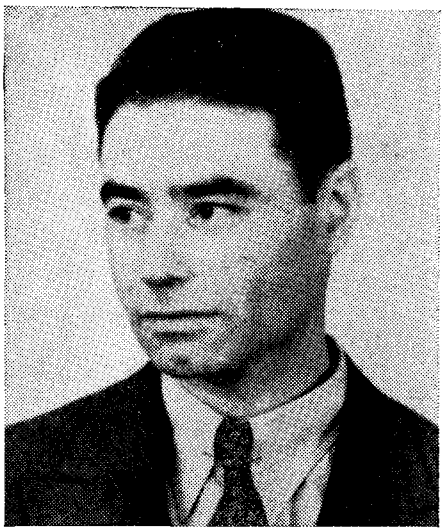
Music. *To a non-musical person nothing seems more fruitless than reading a collection of criticisms about concert and opera performances belonging to the past. To the enthusiast it is a fascinating and rewarding experience, for there is no better way of sharpening one's own critical faculty than by pitting it against the considered opinion of another. Viewed thus as an abrasive, B. H. Haggin's "Music in the Nation" (noted below) fulfils its function admirably. As our reviewer points out, Mr. Haggin has little use for contemporary music. Fortunately, others take a kindlier attitude, and for them the publishers this year have issued several excellent guides, among them "Schönberg and His School," by René Leibowitz, and a newly revised edition of "Music Since 1900," by Nicolas Slonimsky, reviewed in this issue on page 56.*



—*Walker Evans.*

B. H. Haggin: ". . . aridities, ugliness, and horrors."

Judgment in a Tight Little World

MUSIC IN THE NATION. By B. H. Haggin. New York: William Sloane Assoc. 376 pp. $5.

By Cecil Smith

MR. HAGGIN'S new book is a collection of articles about music that have appeared in *The Nation* in the past twenty years. The punning title is an appropriate symbol of its presumptuous and, to my mind, frequently irresponsible contents. *The Nation*, as its own staff will be the first to admit, is quite a different affair from "the nation." On the strength of Mr. Haggin's title one would naturally expect to encounter a sympathetic, informed concern with the creative impulses, representative institutions and personalities, and qualities of taste and appreciation that characterize the musical life of the country. Instead, he is confronted by a tight little world of the author's own imagining—a world dominated by a handful of subject deities (Bernard Shaw, Toscanini, Beecham, Donald Tovey, Mozart, Berlioz, Schnabel, Webster Aitken, and Franz Rupp) and a rather larger group of alleged frauds, nihilists, ungifted pretenders, and members of the great unwashed (Olin Downes, Arthur Judson, the radio networks, the record companies, Deems Taylor, Heifetz, Stokowski, practically all musicologists except Tovey, and practically all living composers).

The fundamental defect of Mr. Haggin's writing is his failure to admit that every critic must discipline his opinions by referring them to the checks and balances of some reality outside his own mind. Mr. Haggin apparently sits at home listening to records (preferably of Mozart quartets or unappreciated works by Berlioz), reads books by Shaw, Tovey, Beecham, and Newman, and scans the daily press in order to upbraid Mr. Downes or to grapple with the enigma of Virgil Thomson, whose brilliant presentation Mr. Haggin cannot reconcile with conclusions he thinks are calculated aberrations. It takes a good deal—at least a Mozart quartet by the Budapest Quartet at the YMHA or a "Figaro" performance at the Metropolitan—to get him out of his armchair and into the living presence of music and musicians. Since he agrees with Shaw's practice of refusing to meet and talk with practising musicians, he is cut off from first-hand knowledge of their aims and problems. It is no ivory tower in which he lives, exultant over the infallibility of Toscanini, displeased with most of Brahms's music and happy with all of Mozart's, and scornful of his journalistic contemporaries. It is a marble mausoleum, no closer to the actual "music of the nation" than the Lincoln Memorial is to the Truman Administration.

Though he is quick to denounce other writers for comparable oversimplifications, Mr. Haggin bases his critical technique largely on a transparent, and rather naive, schematic contrivance. He invokes the bugaboo of Correct Opinion and then seeks to controvert it with highly personal, "illuminating" judgments—which he himself praises immoderately in various essays on the proper nature of criticism. When his notion of Correct Opinion—as is often the case—is as much his own invention as the attitude with which he opposes it, the result is a tempest in a teapot.

The gap between Mr. Haggin's statement of critical theory and his impulse to put that theory to work in the interests of living music is made clear by bringing together two passages from the book:

The theory:

> The critic does have certain obligations to the artist—the obligation to bring an unprejudiced and receptive mind to the artist's work, to keep that mind entirely on that work, and to report honestly what it finds there; the obligation, in other words, to write a criticism of the work, not to misuse it and misrepresent it in an exhibition of the critic's own cleverness, his wit, his learning, his pet ideas, his amusing style.

The application:

> Then there is Aaron Copland's equally wide-eyed, incredible-as-it-may-seem, how-can-such-things-be talk about the "fantastic notions" with which "newspaper writers and radio commentators who ought to know better" have, apparently for the sheer hell of it, misrepresented modern music and prejudiced the public against it—with which Copland tries to persuade us that we haven't ourselves heard the aridities, uglinesses, and horrors of Hindemith, Bartók, Berg, Schönberg, Stravinsky, and the rest—with which he tries to get us to hear in those aridities, uglinesses, and horrors an "enriched musical language" and a "new spirit of objectivity, attuned to our times. . . ."

The Musical Bookshelf

Cumbersome prose increases the opacity of an already difficult subject in **Schönberg and His School**, by René Leibowitz (Philosophical Library, $4.75). Whether it is worth the reader's while to put up with the Leibowitz form for the sake of the Leibowitz content depends first on his affection for twelve-tone composition, second on his ability to follow complex

(*Continued on page 56*)

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THE LITERARY SUMMING-UP

(Continued from page 7)

and Dixon line and for all its ponderous appearance a readable and timely text.

Of the more than 9,000 books published in 1949 I believe that at last count *Publishers' Weekly*, the almost-*Variety* of the book trade, had counted 1,517 as novels. Of them all the one which in my circle engendered the most heated discussion was John O'Hara's "A Rage to Live." Arguments ran pro and con as to whether it was his best or worst book, whether it was a good book or a dull one, whether it depended upon good writing and sound characterization or upon sex alone for its undeniable popular appeal. This novel, which *The New York Times* describes as "the personal history of a Pennsylvania female"—which is, I suspect, only another way for saying it is the story of a typical O'Hara bitch—at least stirred up a lot of fun in the cocktail set from John Bleeck's on West 40th Street north, west, and south. Mr. O'Hara's own *New Yorker* let its reviewer tear it to pieces, thus setting off sparks such as the New York literary set hadn't enjoyed since the 1920's. As to the book's qualities, I respectfully bow out.

It would be unfair to pick any one or two novels and say didactically that they were the best, but any year that produced Guthrie's "The Way West" and Clark's "The Track of the Cat" must be marked off as a successful year. One of the delights of reading during 1949 was to discover that Mr. Guthrie was most definitely not a one-book man. "The Way West" was in many respects a more mature novel both in its conception and execution than the remarkable "The Big Sky." And, similarly, Mr. Clark showed a marked literary advance. His integration of the family he was writing about was of such intense and finished quality that it raised the novel above the symbolism he was trying to express.

As I said earlier, some of the established authors (into which class both Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Clark now move) were disappointing. I think especially of the waste of talent that went into the writing of "The Heat of the Day," Elizabeth Bowen's melange of love, mystery, and war. Nor did Sinclair Lewis do very well with his story of the Midwestern frontier, "The God-Seeker." Bruce Marshall's "To Every Man a Penny," another story about another priest, this time a Parisian, ran disappointingly thin, although the master has not entirely lost his light ecclesiastical touch.

On the other hand, some of the old timers showed that their hands had not lost their skill. At the time I read it I felt that John P. Marquand was at his best with "Point of No Return" but now I am not so sure. At any rate, his study of a New York banker, with Essex County and Boston (but definitely *not* Harvard) background, was deft and literate, a joy to read. Another who did not disappoint was Ludwig Bemelmans, happily moved from Hollywood to his native Tyrol to describe life among the innkeepers of the ski country before, during, and after the Occupation. A novel which I felt did not receive the attention it deserved was "The Green Room," a civilized love story with Jamesian overtones, by Hamilton Basso.

The war seemed to have been pretty well ignored by the authors of the class of '49 but the home front was not. There were three novels about Washington, both ante- and post-World War II. John Dos Passos ended his New Deal trilogy with "The Grand Design," which received more ideological than critical attention, as was perhaps to be expected in the light of what happened in November 1948. Elizabeth Janeway explored official Washington with a fair amount of success in "The Question of Gregory" but her perception of her political characters was not as acute as in her previous study. In this category the best novel was Merle Miller's frightening story of a victim of a Washington witch hunt, "The Sure Thing." Although not without many technical faults, the book cut deeply into the official mind and with true sensitivity laid bare the effects of a past mistake in judgment upon a young man of talent.

From England came two importations with the frantic blessing of that little London clique which seldom sees far beyond the *Horizon*. The first

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

AN ENGLISH POET (1772-1834)

After identifying the fifteen well-known literary characters briefly described below, print their names in the spaces just above the descriptions. The initial letters of the characters' names will spell the name of a famous English poet. Allowing twenty-five points for the name of the poet and five points for each character identified, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers are on page 35.

1. _____
   He demanded a pound of flesh in payment of a loan.
2. _____
   He converted Sadie Thompson and then wished he hadn't.
3. _____
   Heroine of "What Every Woman Knows," by James M. Barrie.
4. _____
   This lawyer had the habit of wringing his clammy hands.
5. _____
   After conquering his pride and her prejudice, she married Darcy.
6. _____
   This one-legged sea cook led a mutiny aboard the *Hispaniola*.
7. _____
   This plumber's daughter became a lady's maid.
8. _____
   The winner of a wrestling match in "As You Like It."
9. _____
   This Exmoor maiden was brought up by a band of outlaws.
10. _____
    She left her own wedding to elope with young Lochinvar.
11. _____
    He was banished from Padua for duelling in the streets.
12. _____
    He was chased by the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.
13. _____
    She gave Samson a haircut.
14. _____
    His strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure.
15. _____
    A backsliding preacher created by Sinclair Lewis.

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and better was George Orwell's fantasy about the future, "Nineteen Eighty-Four," which managed to frighten a lot of people, as it was intended to do. More an editorial than a novel, its picture of the possibilities for terror in total totalitarianism seemed to me to be the fearful expression of a man who had lost all faith in both the democratic process and the dignity of man. The second was "Loving," by Henry Green, a story of servants exiled from England to Ireland during the blitz, which arrived with screams of praise from London and set the editorial offices of *Time* atwitter. Another English importation was Joyce Cary's "To Be a Pilgrim." None of these gave me the impression that Britain was experiencing a literary renaissance.

Back to the American scene. There was one slight and unsignificant—but by no means insignificant—book which was not widely hailed but which received deserved praise from some reviewers: "Eight April Days," by Scott Hart. The eight days were the last days of the Civil War, and the most important days in the lives of two men and two women. A different little book, I should expect it to have a long life, thanks to the impact of its polished style.

At least passing mention should be made of a few other novels, all for different reasons. Mika Waltari's "The Egyptian," a story of Egypt in the fourteenth century before Christ, became a best seller mainly because most reviewers implied and *Newsweek* said (mistakenly) that it was "one of the dirtiest books ever published." I should guess that the news magazine, if sued for fraud by a hopefully erogenous reader, would lose in any court of equity. This somehow reminds me of an editor on

the old *Boston Transcript* who once remarked, "It takes a dirty mind to publish a clean newspaper."

A good, exciting, and different novel was "The Brave Bulls," by Tom Lea. A strange, grim novel was Nelson Algren's intimate account of life on Skid Row, "The Man with the Golden Arm." Hollywoodian with a difference was Harold Robbins's "The Dream Merchants." More than dialect-ically delightful was "Hunter's Horn," by Harriette Arnow. And just plain good was "Double Muscadine," by Frances Gaither, with a courtroom scene far above the average.

I am aware that, in trying to sum up the books of 1949, like the good Episcopalian, I have done those things which I ought not to have done and left undone those things which I ought to have done—and there is no health in me. But I think those books which I have mentioned do give the tone and flavor of the books of the year as a whole. What they add up to, what their ultimate significance is, I would not dare to say. But I do know it was an interesting year.

In what is known as the literary world there were some events besides the publishing of books that are worth recalling. This *Review* stirred up some excitement when it revealed the inadequacies of the best-seller lists. It aroused the ire of the newspapers which regularly publish them and probably spurred the compilers to tighten their systems. The real core of the problem remains unanswered—do these lists do good or harm by continuously calling attention to the popular? The same question is often asked in regard to the big book clubs. There was no answer last year.

Two events brought forth some timely essays in retrospect—the twenty-fifth anniversaries of *The Saturday Review of Literature* and of the *Book Review* of the *New York Herald Tribune*. Harry Hansen retired as book reviewer for the *New York World-Telegram*, leaving the good gray Lewis Gannett dean of that craft in New York. As I have noted, the Nobel Prize Committee took a powder. The Pulitizer Prize went to James Gould Cozzens for "Guard of Honor," one of the better war novels of 1948, and to Roy Franklin Nichols for "The Disruption of American Democracy," a specialized study of the politics just before the Civil War.

The hottest literary controversy was over the awarding of the Library of Congress-Bollingen Prize for poetry to Ezra Pound for "The Pisan Cantos." This was set off by two articles published in *The Saturday Review* in which Robert Hillyer criticized the award because of the political coloration of the book and the fact that Pound was active against the United States during the war. Subsequently the Librarian of Congress announced that no more Bollingen prizes would be granted in the name of his institution. As these words go to press, the controversy still rages in several publications.

And that, as I saw it from my reviewer's perch, was the year 1949, as it was in the Ivory Tower and along Publishers' Row. Except for one thing, which I recall without comment: Upton Sinclair, with the publication of "O Shepherd Speak," announced that 1949 was the year that had seen the last of Lanny Budd.

Karl Schriftgiesser has watched the literary scene for the past twenty-five years as editor of the book pages of The Boston Evening Transcript, The Washington Post, *and* Newsweek. *He is the author of several books and is now living on his farm in Vermont, where he is writing a study of lobbying and a history of the New Deal.*

Mythos

By Leslie Nelson Jennings

NOT only on some broken monolith
In Yucatan is carved the still unknown
Symbol, the indecipherable myth
Of gods who perished earlier than stone.
Always the effigy, the empty shape
Of a lost eminence is left behind,
While through time's narrow crevices escape
Meanings that cast no shadow on the mind.

And we are leaving what will rise at last
Out of the jungle, taller than the tomb
Of Cheops, a necropolis more vast,
Waiting for later comers to exhume
From its foundations relics of a dead
World whose inscriptions will remain unread.

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Seeing Things

THE MODERN LORELEI

NO ONE who saw Carol Channing in "Lend an Ear" can have forgotten her, and no one who sees her in the new musical version of "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes"* will ever forget her. She is not a type; she is the most individual of individuals. Certainly Broadway has not seen her like before. For that matter, I doubt if the human race has. Unchallengeable as her connection with it is, at moments it is wonderfully remote.

That Miss Channing is a contemporary is a fortunate fact. It is a fact which remains beyond dispute even when she is dolled up in those abbreviated, shapeless sacks to which, in fashion's silly name, women submitted themselves during the Twenties. Yet there is also something almost prehistoric about her, something faintly Mesozoic which persists in spite of her modernity. Perhaps the feeling that she would have interested H. G. Wells when he was outlining history as much as she delights us when we are watching her is due to the way in which she carries her head forward and looks down from a great altitude while moving with some difficulty through the jungle of society.

It is not her height which sets Miss Channing apart, though she has plenty of this and to spare. Rather it is everything about her which varies the normal pattern in the very act of following it. Take her eyes, for example. They are so big and far apart that they summon memories of the headlights on a Pierce-Arrow. Then there is Miss Channing's walk, which is a short-stepped, hobbled gait decidedly her own. It is all toes and torture, a cross between a slink and a mince. Her voice, too, whether she is singing or speaking, bears only the slightest and most unintentional resemblance to any other voice. Although it can claim a sultry hoarseness, it is strangely thin. There is unexpected strength, however, in its thinness. It combines a wheedle with a treble, a squeak with a caress.

Far more important than her size and sounds, her looks and walk, there is the matter of Miss Channing's personality. This is as hard to describe as it is easy to enjoy. Who can define with any precision those inner sources of vitality or attraction which condemn some people to being zeros and transform others into exclamation points? Miss Channing belongs in the second category. She demonstrated this even when she was playing lesser parts in "Lend an Ear" by dominating the numbers in which she appeared. Yet the means she employs to command attention are not the usual aggressive ones. On the surface she can seem listless, if not becalmed. Oddly enough, however, her languor is in itself vibrant.

What Miss Channing will do next and what she can do next are, for the moment, irrelevant questions. No doubt they will remain so for many, many months to come. Although her limitations are clear enough, her endowments are clearer still. Considering how unique these are, the sensation she has created on Broadway is only a proper tribute to her. Without being starred (as she deserves to be) overnight she has become a star.

From the foregoing it may be gathered that Miss Channing's dimensions are more outsized than were those of the diamond collector Anita Loos immortalized. Lorelei Lee was a small dish, large only in her will power, her ignorance, her ingenuousness, her ingenuity, her desire to be educated, and her lack of any need for education when it came to depleting the bank accounts of every male who crossed her path. If, therefore, Miss Channing at first appears wrong in scale, in no time she proves acceptable and right. Physically she may turn a cartoon into a poster, but considering the enlarged values necessary in musical comedies the change is all to the good. For present purposes it seems she must have been born to play Lorelei. And what a character Lorelei is!

Six years before Miss Loos's "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" was first published, readers in England and America were delighting in a novel called "The Young Visiters." (Please note the spelling). Supposedly, as few can have forgotten, it was written by a girl of nine named Daisy Ashford. At least J. M. Barrie gave his whimsical guarantee that she had done so. I mention Daisy Ashford because she and Lorelei Lee have their points in common. It was Daisy, of course, who began her novel with the memorable line, "Mr. Salteena was an elderly man of 42 and was fond of asking people to stay with him." It was she who had Mr. Salteena confess in a letter, "I am not quite a gentleman but you would hardly notice it but can't be helped anyhow." And it was she who, in a sentence still widely quoted, described the Prince of Wales at a levee as sitting on a golden chair "in a lovely ermine cloak and a small but costly crown."

Carol Channing—"her languor is in itself vibrant."

Had Daisy Ashford come to America and grown up here under the shadows of Tiffany, Cartier, and Van Cleef & Arpels; had she sought protection in mink or ermine from a cold, cold world; and had she gone wrong in a big but very refined way and developed an itch for travel, she might very well have blossomed into Lorelei Lee. It was Lorelei, after all, who confided to her diary, "When a gentleman is interested in educating a girl, he likes to stay and talk about the topics of the day until quite late, so I am quite fatigued the next day and I do not really get up until it is time to dress for dinner at the Colony." It was she who explained her name by saying it "is the name of a girl who became famous for sitting on a rock in Germany." And it was she, utter realist that she was, who said, "A kiss on the hand may make you feel good but a diamond bracelet lasts forever."

Obviously, the final qualities of the diarist's method, of which Miss Loos took full and delectable advantage, cannot be transferred to the stage. These depended upon the misspellings, the near-Malapropisms, the

GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES, a new musical comedy based on the novel by Anita Loos. Book by Joseph Fields and Miss Loos. Staged by John C. Wilson. Music by Jule Styne. Lyrics by Leo Robin. Dances by Agnes de Mille. Settings by Oliver Smith. Costumes by Miles White. Presented by Herman Levin and Mr. Smith. With a cast including Carol Channing, Yvonne Adair, Jack McCauley, Alice Pearce, Rex Evans, Reta Shaw, George S. Irving, Eric Brotherson, Anita Alvarez, etc. At the Ziegfeld Theatre, New York City. Opened December 8, 1949.

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bogus culture, and the gifts for grab which Lorelei revealed in her confidences to her journal. Above all, they depended upon the fact that the outpourings of Lorelei's stream of unself-consciousness were uninterrupted. Even so, enough of the spirit of the original "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" remains in the musical comedy made from it to suggest its hilarity.

In spite of the disappearance of some of the secondary gold diggers, the plot is much more plotful than it once was. Mr. Eisman, now Mr. Esmond, the great button manufacturer, has both his business and after-business activities threatened by a zipper king. This rivalry results in a musical built—but very agreeably built—along the old familiar lines. It is innocent of innovations; indeed, it is unashamedly conventional. Perhaps its allegiance to a formula dear to playgoers in Lorelei's own time makes it all the more amusing as a re-creation of the Twenties.

I can only confess that, notwithstanding the few who have found it monotonous, the new "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" gave me a very good time. And why not? John C. Wilson has directed it with an unfailing felicity of touch. Oliver Smith's backgrounds are attractive and gay. Miles White's costumes are brilliantly satiric and show a proper lack of benevolence towards the horrors once thought stylish. Agnes de Mille's diverting choreography finds her employing a different and unexpected style. Yvonne Adair, also a graduate of "Lend an Ear," is an entertaining Dorothy; Jack McCauley, a pleasant button czar; and such others as Alice Pearce, Eric Brotherson, Rex Evans, and Anita Alvarez make their welcome contributions.

Then there is a wonderful finale done in the old and almost forgotten Ziegfeld-Earl Carroll manner. In it the show girls strut, their heads topped by mountains of plumes (remember?), their arms upraised to carry tasseled decorations, their torsos (in this case) becupped and (as always) largely windswept. But where such prancings once won a wet-lipped leer, today they win an immediate laugh, and a huge laugh at that.

Although Jule Styne's music may be on the routine side, I cannot remember when I have enjoyed a number more than "A Little Girl from Little Rock." It, of course, and quite rightly, takes me back to Miss Channing. This is where I came in. In all honesty it is also with Miss Channing that "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" in its present form comes very much into the picture. The evening is hers. So is almost everybody bound to be who sees her. —JOHN MASON BROWN.

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DRAMA

(*Continued from page 12*)

sional swan song on tour with William Faversham in "Footloose," by Zoë Aikens. Theatre lovers who caught the fever when the century was young will find Miss Truax's comments on players and performances of those days mirrored in their own home-town footlight memories and enjoy her shrewd analysis of what acting is meant to be.

Drama Notes

THREE PLAYS, by Jean-Paul Sartre. Knopf. $3. In its seven-act, presumably pristine manuscript, "Dirty Hands," the first of the plays in this volume, is even more soporific than its Dalrympled Broadway offspring, "Red Gloves," so hotly disowned by M. Sartre last winter. Hoederer, the Communist Party secretary who wants to make a strategic alliance with the Fascists, although spinier here than Charles Boyer could suggest, is not unattractive. But it would take a Burgess Meredith interpretation to make the revolutionary little rich boy, Hugo, compelling. Idealistic beyond his persuasion, he induces some politically laggard comrades to allow him to assassinate Hoederer. Then he vacillates like a Danish prince, a tendency that may have been aggravated by a singularly silly wife—the playful type. Sartre suggests that her frigidity unnerves Hugo. "Do you suppose," she, Jessica, asks, "that I could be touched by emotion?" Hugo: "No, my little snow-woman. I believe in that coldness of snow. The most passionate seducer would freeze his fingers. He would caress you to warm you a bit, and you would melt in his hands." It's confusing. A more gratifying—and still ironic—climax, as far as his mission is concerned, would be for Hugo to shoot her as well as Hoederer when he surprises them in a flurry.

The second play, "The Respectful Prostitute," is a one-act broadside on racial injustice. Set specifically in the South, New York audiences enjoyed with equanimity its caricature of white supremacy. They marveled at Sartre's grasp of our native culture and gasped, delightedly, at the tart dialogue between the title character and her previous night's paying guest, an extremely crabby, arrogant young man. When the latter in a somewhat circuitous approach fails with vinegar to force her to bear false witness against a Negro accused of raping her, his father, a silver-tongued Senator, succeeds with honeyed sophistry, leaving her bewitched and bewildered and, saddest of all, like the Negro, accepting without question the superiority of their pedigreed antagonists.

"The Victors," last and best of the trio, is a study of the motivations for martyrdom, and, typical of Sartre, has a frustrated denouement. Aside from the sorry fascination that tales of physical torture tend to excite, the play throughout its four acts is provocative and rational. Three men, an adolescent boy, and his sister—members of the French Resistance—are captives awaiting to be, then being "questioned" about the hiding place of their leader. They strangle the frightened boy themselves when he hysterically says he will talk. Afterwards they wonder. Have they sacrificed him for the sake of their pride? Was it just to "win" a morbid game by not telling, and thus as violated human beings regain a measure of dignity?

LIFE WITH MOTHER, by Clarence Day. Made into a play by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse. Knopf. $3. A second and only slightly less peptic helping of the red-headed Day family's genteel Victorian crises, first presented in the comedy "Life with Father." In the sequel, as might be inferred, Mother takes the spot, Father having finally been decently baptized a play ago. Her concern for herself is more temporal, having stubbornly to do with at last acquiring a diamond engagement ring—the one Father gave a former fiancée, who, now plump and arch, refuses to surrender it for any less prostrate plea than "pretty please with sugar on it." (Bessie also prides herself on her sense of humor and has a ringing laugh.) The quest takes three acts and involves two sets: the Day country home at Harrison, N. Y., and for good theatre, the NYC Madison Avenue town house of "Life with Father."

Everyone with an ounce of sentiment loves these plays.

A GUIDE TO THEATRE READING, by Roy Stallings and Paul Myers. National Theatre Conference, N. Y. Cloth $2.50, paper $1.50. Under the supervision of George Freedley, theatre curator of The New York Public Library, the editors of this volume have gathered in easy-to-read format a selected bibliography of works which have appeared since 1932, to serve as link to "A Theatre Library," by Rosamund Gilder, published on that date. There are, in addition, a few earlier offerings. Meant for students, professionals, and interested laymen, the book's contents are categorized as theatre practice, biography, English, American, Continental, and Oriental historical theatre, historical theatre (survey), drama as literature,

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Child's Song

By Constance Meredith

I CHANGED him from a knight, the gull that glistens,
His armor polished by the sun,
Scanning the sea that listens, listens,
Listens for the mermaids' run;
While I, like venturers of yore,
Prospect for treasure on the shore.

I place my riches—wealth untold—
Bright stones and echoing shells,
(That once were hidden pirate gold
And naiad wedding bells)
On neat exhibit, one by one,
Across the scalloped dune,
For admiration of the sun,
And envy of the moon.

The waves bow low and whisper by,
"Whist! now he's King," they say,
as I,
Marqueed by heaver's infinite blue,
Receive the curtseying air;
For all the world belongs to me,
And all the world is fair!

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dramatic criticism, production, acting, educational theatre, and esthetics of theatre. A brief résumé and paragraph on the author follow each entry, but prices are omitted. One thing—Bernard Sobel's "The Theatre Handbook," which the editors suggest should be revised and brought up to date, was, last year.

THE BIG KNIFE, by Clifford Odets. Random. $2.50. The author denies that this work is anti-Hollywood, preferring to have it regarded simply as melodrama, a term defined in part by our "American College Dictionary" (Random) as "a play which does not observe the dramatic laws of cause and effect . . ." That's accurate enough when you consider film star Charlie Castle, a man tormented by the shackles of a fourteen-year, $3,744,000 contract allowing approval of scripts and a $25,000 dividend on every picture released. His estranged wife, Marion, needles him to go back to Broadway, where, presumably with no attractive women about to distract him, they could lead a normal life and he could resume as the "Van Gogh" of the theatre. Charlie is supposed to have been a sincere fellow, but neither the youngster whom he drunkenly ran down nor his publicity man who took the rap for him prickle his conscience any. He drinks a great deal and is seduced by the publicist's wife. Then the starlet he was cuddling the night of the accident talks too much and, unwilling to have her effectively silenced, Charlie climbs a winding staircase, slips into a hot tub, and slashes his wrists. The whole thing is a little out of focus, including some of the stage directions: "MARION, *sitting at the bar and sipping a cold drink, is marketing by telephone. She is revealing herself now as a bustling housewife . . .*"

THE BEST ONE-ACT PLAYS OF 1948-1949, edited by Margaret Mayorga. Dodd, Mead. $3. The twelfth annual selection of ten one-act plays considered by Margaret Mayorga most interpretive of the human scene. If so, there's manifestly plenty of room for other observations. Miss Mayorga rightly sighs over the paucity of comedy on tap, and it may be significant that the one she has selected—"Whistle, Daughter, Whistle," a radio-television script by Ernest Kinoy, with no pretensions of earnestness—is, to our mind, the realest. There is, of course, some tabloid truth in Elizabeth Wilson Hughes's play with music about a homicidal adulterer whose "Wantin' Fever" embraces not only his work-worn paramour, but her land as well. And "Impasse," by Frederick A. Woodress, a tale of ironically denied revenge, although contrived, has dramatic punch. Also represented in the group are Gerty Agoston, Theodore Apstein, Scott Graham Williamson and Joseph Shore, Ward Costello, Barbara Packer, Arnold Perl, and Stanley Richards.

Source for each play is given, along with biographical notes on the author. In addition, the volume lists selected plays of the year with bibliographies, new collections of one-act plays, important drama books, and previous annuals' contents.

THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT, by Jean Giraudoux. Random. $2.50. Although this play has been given a polished, adroit production in New York for the past thirteen months, under the reading lamp it reveals a few red whiskers. The satire by the late Jean Giraudoux, adapted by Maurice Valency, concerns a motley of Paris tatterdemalions, who, led by the Madwoman of Chaillot (a wonderfully unbalanced, frowsy old peacock), gaily rids the earth of a cartel of swindlers and associates. Thus happiness is restored to the virtuous impoverished, the sun shines, birds sing, the juggler gets more elevation from his props. On the boards, evidently directed by wand, the comedy is enchanting. Between them, with all its symbols showing, it is a rather wry keepsake of an era when Marxism wore a more cherubic face.

THEATRE WORLD, Season 1948-49, *edited by Daniel Blum. Greenberg. Cloth,* $3.50. *Paper,* $2. A comprehensive, non-critical record of plays and musicals on and off-Broadway, in Chicago, the summer theatre, and limbo. This book, the fifth annual edition, has lots of pictures and everything vital by way of statistics short of the financial and a few actresses' ages. Besides *Playbill* data and brief individual synopses of productions, Mr. Blum lists Pulitzer Prize, Drama Critics' Circle, and Theatre World Award winners. There are biographies of performers, producers, directors, designers, and choreographers; a page for famous players of yesterday with the season's obituaries, and a complete index.

EASTWARD IN EDEN, by Dorothy Gardner. Longmans, Green. $2.50. According to Dorothy Gardner—but not necessarily history, George Whicher notes mildly in a generous foreword—the poet Emily Dickinson, before her twenty-five-year reclusion, was a high-spirited agnostic with a not-unique girlish conviction that when Mr. Right turned up she would be "struck with lightning." And when she hears the Rev. Dr. Charles Wadsworth preach in Philadelphia, she is. Mutually enraptured, they exchange soul-searching communications, in which Emily distills his verbose findings into sparkling, precise poetry. If things had worked out that might in time have ruffled him but Charles, *c'est la vie,* is already married. When he scurries West in careful renunciation Emily swoons, and, comatose, dreams she is patting his antimacassar. Of course, nowadays any lady would instantly, although reluctantly, recognize it as primary Freud, wish-fulfilment, and rouge a stiff upper lip. But Emily sees the vision as promise of immortal reunion, and, to the embarrassment of the Dickinsons, retires to her garden to mope away an earthly interim penning ardent verse. Could a girl who had been keen for the waltz be like that? The curtain eventually falls, the assumption being that they'll meet in heaven. And heaven knows what he will do with the wife and kiddies there.

—ROCHELLE GIRSON.

Erratum

Dr. Horace M. Kallen, author of "The Education of Free Men," is the only surviving member of the original faculty of the New School for Social Research and not, of course—*vide* Alvin Johnson, *et al.*—the "last surviving founder," as stated in *SRL* Dec. 17.

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FICTION

(Continued from page 17)

has been fired as truck-driver, for an assault springing out of the black temper. He heads on foot for Dulrannoch to seek a new job where a big power project is under construction. He meets a fine, bonny woman in a roadside cottage, where he splits some kindling for his lunch and in the tragic blunder of what passes between them his fury is ignited, he strikes her, and she dies. The rest is chase with the pressure mounting as the web closes, and his hairbreadth escapes and desperate sorties taxing Tam ever more relentlessly.

Mr. Walker is a skilful writer. He knows, from his own experience as a fugitive war prisoner, the psychological graph of the hunted man. His highly schematized closing device, which might have been a defect in a book of another type, is just the right thing for this novel. It is the keynote of the tale-teller, to lift this story abruptly out of the minute realism characterizing its body, and set it in a frame apart from most recent manhunt stories.

—Edmund Fuller.

THE MATING SEASON, by P. G. Wodehouse. Didier. $2.95. By now all readers know what to expect of "a hilarious new Jeeves novel," as the publishers put it; and they are getting it in full measure. Wodehouse has a way with him; he has made an art of the gag and the wisecrack, and hash of realism. Jeeves, the impeccable valet, is as necessary to him as Watson was ever to Sherlock Holmes. Wodehouse is essentially the silly-season novelist.

As in so many of his previous novels, Wodehouse plays in this one on the comedy-of-errors *motif*. His people are forever getting in wrong, forever over-playing their hands. They play with their kind of existence as a kitten plays with a skein of knitting wool, before the end becoming entangled in the loose threads. Consequently, to detail a plot by this novelist is an impossibility.

Everything is deliberately made wrong in the beginning, and the wrong grows and grows only that in the end the ingenious Jeeves may come to the rescue and set everything straight. Thus the story begins with an invitation to the dashing Bertram Wooster, writer and entertainer, to visit Deverill Hall, where he might display his talents for a parish benefit. Five—no less than five—scheming aunts preside over the destinies of the manor house, and their function seems to be to direct Cupid's arrows according to their own notions, which are not always the notions of the several young people concerned. True love meets with continued calamities until Jeeves steps in and, with his inimitable skill, throws enchanting Corky into the arms of Esmond, Madeline into Gussie's, etc. And, as the jacket says, "there are no lonely hearts after the Mating Season."

—John Cournos.

ONE ON THE HOUSE, by Mary Lasswell. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50. Don't let the numeral in the title fool you or raise the hopes of the WCTU. Miss Tinkham, Mrs. Rasmussen, and Mrs. Feeley have not cut down on their intake of malt. The three elderly wassailers of "Suds in Your Eye" are still bending seasoned elbows and still straining seams for a hop-flavored boff. Lofty Miss Tinkham, as of yore, pulls genteel quotations out of exotic hats. Mrs. Rasmussen's culinary genius is still the despair of the Cordon Bleu. Plump little white-haired Mrs. Feeley—she still rhymes laugh with quaff and cooks up guffaws much as Mrs. Rasmussen assembles salads.

As any Lasswell fan knows, her three merry old souls are residents of Noah's Ark in San Diego. The Ark is Mrs. Feeley's emporium of secondhand merchandise, where two of everything may be found. Mrs. Feeley calls it a junk pile, but don't you dare to. In "One on the House" the free spirits of the Pacific have been turned loose on the Atlantic seaboard, not far from the Brooklyn Navy Yard. With Old Timer, handy man of the Ark, they are visiting Mrs. Feeley's Navy nephew and his family. The visit over, how is the venerable trio to return to San Diego? This makes the rest of the story.

With jokes flying fast and furious and kind deeds warming the heart, it is downright churlish of the customer to complain. Here, all the same, is a minority protest against the occasional archness of Mrs. Feeley's humor and against laughter at the expense of her first-grade reading performance and of the late Mr. Rasmussen's unavailability. That out of the way, let us give heed to Miss Lasswell's rowdy Arkadians as they ask Broadway what that madwoman of Chaillot has that they haven't got.

—Ann F. Wolfe.

THE DUSTY GODMOTHER, by Michael Foster. Rinehart. $2.75. This highly readable novel is a study in contradictions; half fragile, Nathanesque fantasy, half vivid story of action and suspense. Its masculine characters, particularly Kerry and Vollard, are drawn with conviction, understanding, and adroit economy of detail, and its scenes, laid in newspaper offices and a shoddy hotel, are authentic. The suspense is real: we have learned enough of the past to accept what transpires, but we lose none of the dramatic impact of its unfolding. In his scenes with the two important women of his tale the author has been less successful. Anne Vollard is somehow never an appealing, a living human being. As a personality and as a girl in love with Kerry, she is ambiguous, nebulous, and colorless. Julie is a dream child, the little daughter, perhaps, whom lonely men the world over like to imagine but whose existence and final, prematurely old gesture have little connection with childhood.

—Pamela Taylor.

MISS PETTINGER'S NIECE, by Dorothy Erskine. Creative Age. $3. Look at a small town, stroll its streets, study its people, penetrate its façades, smear established veneers, and then take stock. In this case it all adds up to terror, sadness, and cruelty. Foibles and frustrations mark the old; resignation too early scars the young.

There is ancient Miss Louise Pettinger, eager only to pamper her beautiful niece. A surreptitious scrounging of milk bottles and tea cakes enables her to balance her budget, quell her hunger, and exercise her benevolence. Then there is the niece herself, tragically losing a new-found ecstasy to accept what proves to be a criminal compromise. Hers is the real despair, heightened with drama. For the rest, the seasons pass, intimate details remain common knowledge, personalities become more marked, and the pattern stands pat. Miss Erskine's community emerges as unclaimed, unlovely, yet typical.

—Catherine Meredith Brown.

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AMERICANA

(*Continued from page 19*)

trait emerged. The compilation does, however, serve as a guide-post directing the reader to original sources and should stimulate interest in the processes and methods of biographical and historical research.

OKLAHOMA — FOOT-LOOSE AND FANCY-FREE, by Angie Debo. University of Oklahoma Press. $3.75. The floor of Oklahoma is still more important than the cellar. Oil is not its chief crop; farm products stay well ahead. As Miss Debo points out, the disappearance of agriculture would cause "vastly more excitement" than would the drying up of the oil. Her book is a sort of three-in-one job—historical sketch, reference manual, cultural appraisal — blended into a readable mixture. Some of her comments are critical and tart; of one of the works of Welborn Hope, a professed poet whose career seems to be patterned after Joaquin Miller's, Miss Debo remarks: "It sounds peevish and a little bilious, but for the life of me I cannot see any poetry in it." This is a competent little handbook and it would be silly to plan an extended stay in Oklahoma without reading it. It is also well worth the attention of people who merely want to know something about Oklahoma.

THE SHIRLEY LETTERS FROM THE CALIFORNIA MINES, 1851-1852, with an introduction and notes by Carl I. Wheat. Knopf. $3.50. Louise Amelia Knapp Smith Clappe was the wife of a physician who went to San Francisco in 1849, found the climate on the damp side, and moved up into the Feather River country. In 1851 he sent for his wife, who joined him and who, without suspecting their importance, wrote a series of letters to her sister in "the States" which constituted one of the earliest accounts, and certainly the sprightliest, of life in the diggings. The letters, under the signature of "Dame Shirley," first appeared in print in *The Pioneer Magazine* in San Francisco in 1854-55; they have twice been published in limited editions, but the present edition is the first to make them widely available. They are excellent reading; after a sentence or two they lose any accrued mustiness and emerge for what they are—a stimulating and absorbing recital of men and events as seen by a capable, humorous, and not invariably sympathetic observer. Mr. Wheat's good notes explain the few points that need explaining. Eighteen well-selected and well-reproduced prints accent the flavor of time and place. Students of typography will be interested to learn that the type here used is an experimental Linotype face called Stuyvesant, designed by W. A. Dwiggins, and now employed for the first time in a book.

THE EARTH BROUGHT FORTH: A History of Minnesota Agriculture to 1885, by Merrill E. Jarchow. Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul. $3. Farming has come a long way since the days of Cahoon's Hand Rotation Seed Sower and the Celebrated Warren Milk Bottle ("Nothing but Glass in Contact with the Milk"), but if it were not for those days we wouldn't have these, and that is what makes this informative sketch considerably more than a mere statement for the record. There are only two or three statistical tables in the whole book, but they get right down to earth—cost of equipment for a 160-acre wheat farm in 1882, for instance, $1,255 (including $20 for fanning mill with cockle attachment). This is a factual, highly readable account of what pre-Cleveland farming in Minnesota was like, how much it cost, how much it made, the equipment it used, and the folks who used it. There are chapters on the farmer's home and his social life, including the saloon. Even city people can enjoy this sound, well-documented, and graphic little study.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF KENTUCKY HISTORY, by J. Winston Coleman, Jr. University of Kentucky Press, Lexington. $10. This is a roster of 3,571 books concerned wholly, or in some part, with Kentucky. The titles are broken down into seventy-six categories and are arranged alphabetically by author within these. Brief descriptions, from a dozen to a hundred words long, are appended. Mr. Coleman lists some sixty works of fiction with Kentucky settings, and thereby turns up such a varied bag as James Lane Allen, Robert Montgomery Bird, Winston Churchill (the American), Joseph Hergesheimer, Mary J. Holmes, James Otis, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, and William Gilmore Simms. This is the sort of book which the student may want to consult once in fifty years, but when he does want to consult it it becomes worth its weight in platinum.

HORSES AND HEROES: The Story of the Horse in America for 150 Years, by Frazier Hunt and Robert Hunt. Scribner's. $4.50. Horses have their Horatio Alger heroes—witness Diomed, "the horse nobody wanted," sold in England in 1798 at the age of twenty-one for $250 and brought to America to father fifty-five sons, some of them great; witness Hambletonian, bought with his mother in 1849 for $125, who sired 1,331 foals and brought his owner $300,000 in stud fees (and had a race named after him). The first horses to reach America (ruling out prehistory) came with Columbus on his second (1493) voyage; even in an age when cowboys ride herd in airplanes there are still ten million horses and mules in the United States. The Hunts, father and son, lard their chronicle with good anecdotes and a cluster of excellent pictures. They are concerned not merely with race horses, but with all kinds. It is not essential to know what a martingale is in order to enjoy this book.

THE LETTERS OF ROBERT MACKAY TO HIS WIFE, WRITTEN FROM PORTS IN AMERICA AND ENGLAND, 1795-1816, edited with an introduction and notes by Walter Charlton Hartridge. University of Georgia Press, Athens. $4. Robert Mackay was a Savannah merchant who, fortunately for posterity, spent much of his time on the road. He never forgot the little woman, and she, in turn, loyally kept his letters, which in due course reached the conserving hands of the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America, under whose auspices they are now published. Some of the letters are from England, some from Southern ports, and several from the North. Mackay was forthright in his opinions. He called Norfolk "without exception the dirtiest hole that ever was built"; two weeks later he still reported it as "very dirty, but the people are kind & hospitable, & live better than any place I ever was in, & for less money." Going to Saratoga to take the waters, he traveled up the Hudson to Albany by steamer (this was in

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1816): "We had something like 160 Passengers . . . plenty of room and never in each others way, three courses of dinner, all hot & not one thing at second or third that had been at a first table"—all this only nine years after the *Clermont*'s maiden voyage. Mackay observed shrewdly and wrote vividly. His correspondence well merits the perpetuation here given it, for which Mr. Hartridge provides competent notes.

EMPIRE OIL: The Story of Oil in New York State, by John P. Herrick, Dodd, Mead. $5. Consider for a moment, if you will, the Van Buren brothers—Warren, Melvin, and Merton—of Bolivar, New York. They were oil-well shooters of the 1890's. They were lucky—only one of them was ever blown up, though the other two had fantastic escapes. There was quite a traffic in illicit nitroglycerin in those days and its practitioners were known as moonlighters. One of the best-known and longest-lived manufacturers of legitimate explosives was a woman—Mrs. Byron Alvord. The product of her factory blasted out the power canals at Niagara Falls. These are a few of the fascinating oddments of fact that emerge from Mr. Herrick's amiable recollections and researches. As editor and publisher of an oil-region newspaper for many years, he knows what he is talking about, and he talks informatively and entertainingly. It will probably be news to many people that in 1948 New York State produced 4,000,000 barrels of oil valued at $22,000,000.

THE WILL OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, 1757, reproduced in facsimile with an introduction by Carl Van Doren. The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia. $1. In the spring of 1757 Franklin was preparing to sail for England to kick about taxation. Sea travel being hazardous, particularly with England and France at war, he made a will—his second, in fact—and in 1788 he made a third, adding a codicil in 1789. The 1757 will, entirely in the testator's own hand, is, as Mr. Van Doren points out, "like everything Franklin ever wrote, perfectly clear," and it is perfectly legible in facsimile. Mr. Van Doren, who knows a little about Franklin, identifies the beneficiaries in detail but is stumped by two of the three witnesses. By the terms of this 1757 testament, Franklin bequeathed "my Electrical Apparatus . . . to Yale College at New-haven in Connecticut." This probably consisted of the open trolley-cars which, regardless of weather, the local traction interests used up to a year or two ago to transport intending spectators to the Yale Bowl. —JOHN T. WINTERICH.

I SHALL not say that the Simon & Schuster edition of "The Pickwick Papers" ($5), based on the Nonesuch Press text, is a Pickwick to end all Pickwicks, for the making of Pickwicks in many shapes and sizes and for all possible readers should never have an end so long as English remains a language known to man; but I will say that this particular Pickwick, stoutly bound in blue and cleanly printed in large type, with numerous new, delightful illustrations by Frederick E. Banbery, and an introduction by Clifton Fadiman, is a Pickwick to make all future publishers of Pickwick pause in their Pickwickian progress and ask themselves if they can possibly do better. A joy in any form, even in a shabby, small-type, cheap, late-nineteenth-century edition, the history of England's most famous club —whose members' names are among the bright coins of our language, together with the names of other immortal men and women met upon their travels—is still more enjoyable in an embodiment such as this one.

Mr. Banbery, meeting the challenge of "Phiz" with noteworthy success, has given us his own amusing, convincing, probably durable likenesses of Pickwick, Sam Weller, Mr. Jingle, Mrs. Bardell, and the rest. Mr. Fadiman's introduction shows that he has not only read Dickens with relish and devotion, but that he has also read a great deal that has been written by other critics about Dickens; and he has happily enriched his critical study with aptly borrowed insights and remarks. There is no space here in which to consider the several interesting theories regarding Dickens and his work which Mr. Fadiman puts forward, but there is space to say that one need not completely share his post-Freudian approach to the subject or agree with his now fashionable view of the Victorians as "guilt-ridden" creatures to find in his introduction much that is penetrative and fruitfully suggestive. It should also be added that this admirable edition contains end-paper maps of the six Pickwickian tours, three relevant chapters from "Master Humphrey's Clock," and certain supplementary matter.

Clifton Fadiman's remarks on Dickens's relation to the law and legal authority remind me that I should have noted here, before now, the new edition of Jerome Frank's "Law and the Modern Mind" (Coward-McCann, $5). Writing for layman as well as lawyer, the author exposes the fallibility of our "court-house government" and the inefficiency of the "rules" in the face of contested facts and faulty fact-finding; argues that "the current demand for exactness and predictability in law is incapable of satisfaction because a greater degree of legal finality is sought than is procurable, desirable or necessary"; attacks the myth that there is no judge-made law; exposes the several sources of judicial fallibility and the illusory character of precedents; considers the mysterious ways of jurors; surveys the views of eminent lawyers and judges, and salutes Holmes as "the completely adult jurist." He also, no less than Mr. Fadiman, employs the psychoanalytic approach, and if he errs at all it is probably because he has excessive faith in its techniques of interpretation.

Lewis White Beck, of Lehigh University, has done a fine, scholarly job in his translation and editing of Kant's "Critique of Practical Reason and Other Writings in Moral Philosophy" (University of Chicago Press, $5). His introduction alone makes this book of great value. Particularly interesting today are "Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals" and "Perpetual Peace." Quote—"Nothing in the world—indeed nothing even beyond the world—can possibly be conceived which could be called good without qualification except a *good will*."

It is pleasant to have Lytton Strachey's essays in two small volumes—"Literary Essays" and "Biographical Essays" (Harcourt, Brace, $2.75 each)—and an even greater pleasure to find that many of these papers, such as those on Racine, Beddoes, and Voltaire, along with a number of deft biographical sketches, possess enduring qualities.

Three of Katherine Anne Porter's best stories are in "Pale Horse, Pale Rider" (Modern Library, $1.25) . . . Alfred North Whitehead's "The Aims of Education and Other Essays" is a distinguished addition to Mentor Books (35¢) . . . Recent Bantam Books include Steinbeck's tough-sentimental "Cannery Row," Conan Doyle's "The Hound of the Baskervilles," and "The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes." —BEN RAY REDMAN.

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the Phoenix Nest

NEIGHBOR TO PINEWOODS

HE has seen changes in the countryside
The seventy years he's been here, man and boy.
The village he first knew was ringed with woods,
With only one road leading to the town.
There was a sawmill on the stream, and then,
Someone put up a shop for turned-wood things—
Hoe-handles and such. And one man had a press
And printed labels for them—bright red, they were.
Ben showed me some: he used to set the type.
It was a full day's trip to get to town
And back; folks went in once a week with eggs
And butter. After a while the electric trolley
Started through; and, as time passed, there were
Less woods, more houses, two or three new schools.
Then autos came. Now all the roads are black
Instead of dirt. And Ben goes on. To him,
While things are different, somehow the place
Looks much the same. He's on a hill and gets
The view over-all. "Still pinewoods round," he'll say;
"Take over east—you'd never guess it's there—
That new state superhighway, as it's called,
The airplane beacon, though, trees can't hide that—
Yonder on Benton's Hill. Yes, woods still stay.
And from the back pantry window I can see
Mount Washington, like always. When we dug
The cellar hole, I thought, we'll always have
A mountain there to look at any time."
And so things are. Wife dead, and family gone,
Ben Hunt makes out. An odd job here and there
Keeps him content and busy. Some day, he knows,
Death will turn into the yard like an old neighbor
Who stops for a friendly word at the kitchen door.

—DOLORES CAIRNS.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Shylock. 2. Alfred Davidson. 3. Maggie Wylie. 4. Uriah Heep. 5. Elizabeth Bennet. 6. Long John Silver. 7. Cluny Brown. 8. Orlando. 9. Lorna Doone. 10. Ellen Netherby. 11. Romeo. 12. Ichabod Crane. 13. Delilah. 14. Galahad. 15. Elmer Gantry. ENGLISH POET: Samuel Coleridge.

* * *

UNCLE ME NO UNCLES

The popular appeal of motion pictures being what it is, the successful run of "Hamlet" at the Park Avenue Theatre in New York disturbs me in one respect: the perpetuation of the malignment of uncles. The character who plots with Hamlet's mother to kill Hamlet, Sr., and then marries the Mrs. is certainly not admirable; but why couldn't he have been Hamlet's second cousin instead of his uncle?

Shakespeare's plays have many cruel uncles; children's stories also have their share. When two boys are fighting, the one getting the worse of it—to be let up—has to cry "Uncle," apparently the lowest term of degradation. "Uncle," it may be noted, is also slang for pawnbroker and the diminutive termination of carbuncle.

Surely, we uncles don't deserve that! Quite often I've been introduced to the children of friends as "uncle" and I know the reason why. An uncle is the softest touch there is, a patsy, a lollypop surrounded by nephews and nieces—natural and acquired.

For uncles, Christmas comes all year round—to give, not receive. Uncles do not acquire status through birth pains or sleepless vigils in maternity-ward waiting rooms; their status is imposed. However, for the privilege of "enjoying the children," uncles are duty bound to present gifts on such occasions as births, parties, holidays, teethings, visits, and in-betweens. A bachelor uncle or childless uncle is particularly favored by parents; for him baby-sitting is considered a treat (oft repeated) and very good discipline. The approach runs something like this: Well, after all, what is an uncle for, anyway?

As counter-action, I have seriously considered proposing the establishment of an Uncle's Day, but I fear it would only be regarded as another day for receiving gifts from uncle. We uncles cannot resign; there is no society for our protection; our fate is sealed by others. However, we should at least like to face our position with dignity and be regarded in our true light. Accordingly, I beg of our readers, if they must commit some unsavory deed—in a relative sort of way—won't they please do so as a cousin, etc.—not as an uncle.

—SAM BERGMAN.

* * *

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A writer in the rhyming game
Reveals the follies of his dame:
Her every harmless secret whim
Becomes a stock in trade for him.
As his repute begins to rise,
Hers may go contrariwise.

—JOHN MCGIFFERT.

* * *

The Peter Pauper Press of Mount Vernon, N. Y., is to be specially commended for the book-making of "The Songs of Sappho" in English translation by many poets, decorated by Paul McPharlin; for "Barrack-Room Ballads & Departmental Ditties," by Rudyard Kipling, decorated by Fritz Kredel; and for "Peter Pauper's Limerick Book, A Collection from Many Sources," illustrated by Herb Roth.

The Swallow Press and William Morrow & Co. have instituted a series called Books of the Renaissance, already having published "Some Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt," edited by Alan Swallow. Now they bring out "Sixty Poems by Scève," introduction, translation, and comment by Wallace Fowlie. Maurice Scève was a sixteenth-century French poet, whose poem to his Délie "set the fashion for a series of poems addressed to a real or an imaginary mistress." Pierre de Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay, both of the group called The Pléiade, followed his example. —WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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BOOKED for TRAVEL

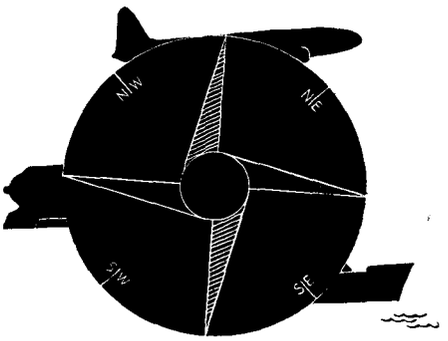
CLOUDS ON THE WILD BLUE YONDER

ALTHOUGH one of its announced purposes was to spread peace and good will throughout the world, the Holy Year of 1950 has thus far inspired a notable lack of both among the country's overseas airlines. The vital issue at hand is who is going to fly the pilgrims to Rome during this first Holy Year of the air age and how low the airlines are going to undercut each other to get the business.

After the country's military pilots had proved during the war that flying the Atlantic would be feasible on a commercial, regularly scheduled basis during the peace, the Civil Aeronautics Board in 1945 set about cutting up the European pie. Pan American World Airways was awarded London and Frankfurt, and Trans-World Airline was certificated to operate a line to Paris and Rome. It has been expressed from time to time by partisan representatives of Pan American that they thought the gravy route had been awarded to TWA. On the other hand, TWA executives have indicated that Pan American had been handed the number-one city in Europe. At any rate, both airlines stuck to their knitting and improved the service on the respective routes with the successive institution of Constellations, DC-6's, Boeing Stratocruisers, not to mention such fripperies as sleeper flights, cocktail bars, course-by-course dinner service, orchids for lady travelers, and a red carpet which one line actually spreads across the runway when passengers embark.

It was not without considerable commotion, therefore, that Pan American announced early in December that in concert with an organization known as Felix Roma it planned to fly pilgrims to Rome on ten-day, all-expense tours. The flat fee, including air transportation both ways, all meals and hotel rooms, five days of excursions outside Rome, tickets to museums, theatres, and the opera in season, came to a neat $698. The regular round-trip, mid-season fare via TWA and Air France, the scheduled airlines, was $747 for transportation alone. Pan American, which had been beating the drums for years for low-cost, tourist-class air transportation, crowed: "[The plan] is within the means of many thousands of the 30,000,000 Americans who last year received less than $5,000."

Pan American's announcement was made just one day after the Civil Aeronautics Board invited air carriers to submit application for special flights between New York and Rome. Pan American would fly its pilgrims to Rome as an unscheduled charter airline, yet it would be able to offer Rome passengers the experience, equipment, personnel, confidence, and know-how of its great worldwide service. Felix Roma turned out to be a non-profit Catholic organization formed last summer by the World



Council of Men for Catholic Action. It expects to arrange trips to Rome for more than 300,000 Catholics from the Western Hemisphere. It could also, with some assurance, offer every pilgrim (as it did) an audience with the Pope. One of its executives, Prince Guillio Pacelli, is a nephew of Pius XII.

As a clincher, the announcement issued jointly by Felix Roma and Pan American said: "The low cost passage will implement the Papal Bull of May 26, 1949, in which the hope is expressed that 'an immense multitude from every corner of the world . . . may flock to this beloved City in quest of the riches of Heaven. . . .' The Holy Year Jubilee in 1950 . . . is designed especially to combat the challenge of Communism."

If TWA now chose to fight Pan American's entrance into the Rome run they might ostensibly be criticized for being (1) anti-Catholic and (2) pro-Communist.

TWA decided to take the risk. "We have served Rome to the best of our ability," a spokesman said quietly, "and we did not make any attempt to serve London during the Olympics of 1948, since the city was clearly off our assigned route. We have made certain commitments and incurred certain expenditures to service Rome during the Holy Year. Felix Roma and Pan American with two flights a week and more frequent flights planned later in the season is flying on schedule, and we feel our territory is being invaded. We will fight it with superior service or charter flights of our own. It's a cinch we won't take it lying down."

The allusion by the TWA spokesman to "certain commitments" referred to the addition of some twenty Constellations to the European service. In airline circles there were those who insidiously insisted that TWA was financing its new Constellations by charging high rates to pilgrims during a Holy Year.

Six days after the first Pan American proclamation the International Air Transport Association, whose membership includes Pan American and the regular Rome carriers, TWA

Airline Fares Compared with New Rail Fares

Fare comparisons below do not include Federal transportation tax of 15%. The fares are figured on a 12½% increase over old published fares in railroad timetables.

		Airline		Railroad	
From	*To*	*1st Class*	*Coach*	*1st Class*	*Coach*
Chicago	New York	$44.10	$29.60	$48.64*	$30.71
New York	Cleveland	25.10	17.80	30.70*	19.33
Pittsburgh	New York	20.60	12.80	23.84*	14.85
Washington	Chicago	36.80	24.30	41.70*	25.91
Chicago	Pittsburgh	26.25	16.80	25.25*	15.86
Detroit	New York	30.10	21.00	36.39*	23.35
Cleveland	Washington	19.80	12.50	23.39*	14.51
Pittsburgh	Washington	12.10	7.50	16.84*	10.05
Washington	New York	13.40	8.60	11.85**	7.58
Cleveland	Chicago	19.00	12.95	17.58**	11.57
Detroit	Washington	26.30	16.70	32.33*	20.09

* Includes first-class rail fare and Pullman lower berth.
** Includes first-class rail fare and parlor-car seat.

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and Air France, announced new low rates for all scheduled flights to Europe. The new round-trip fare during the off-season would be 110 per cent of the one-way fare if the return flight was made within fifteen days. TWA immediately announced a fifteen-day, all-inclusive Holy Year tour, which includes museum entrance fees, English-speaking guides, and stops in Florence, Genoa, the Riviera, and Paris, for $646. TWA's tour, although it will only run through March 1950, was now $52 cheaper and five days longer than Pan American's.

The winner of the scuffle is of course the air traveler. He gets the benefit of the lower fares and he won't have to worry unless the airlines undercut each other to the point of further Federal subsidy. The danger of that isn't imminent. Meanwhile the British have issued an announcement which calls the attention of all Americans to the fact that a "$500 Fortnight" in the British Isles now might become a reality with the new $385 round-trip fare from New York to London. Of the domestic airlanes, both American Airlines and TWA have just begun coast-to-coast coach service using DC-4's. In the spring American will put DC-6's on the coach run. Eddie Rickenbacker is offering air-coach flights to Miami, leaving New York at 11:30 each night, for $47.50. The net operating profit of the scheduled domestic trunk airlines was twenty-four million dollars for the first nine months of 1949, compared to a net loss of eight million dollars for the same period last year. With the railroad fares going up and the air-coach or second-class system of flying catching on, it is now possible to travel from Detroit to New York by air for $2.25 less than the cheapest form of rail transportation. Even many first-class railroad fares, including lower berth or parlor-car seat, are higher with the new rail rates than first-class airline fares. From Pittsburgh to Washington, as an example, the $16.84 new rail fare is now $4.74 higher than the flight.

In the air, as the year ended and the Forties flickered out, things were looking up. And on the ground somebody came up with the usual semi-annual scheme to revamp the Long Island Railroad. It is still insolvent and unpopular. —HORACE SUTTON.

TRAVELERS' TALES

THE CONDOR AND THE COWS, by Christopher Isherwood. Photographs by William Caskey. Random. $3.50.

The English novelist who has lately been writing travel sketches for *Holiday* has come up with a travel diary based on a trip through five South American countries. It is all personalized adventure and observation. Isherwood finds the traffic in Bogotá noisier than Third Avenue, thinks the architecture of the neat silver tanks and the dreary model bungalows should be called "Oil Colonial." He visits American and British officials abroad, finds the Americans frank, the British mixed up in a life of "tweeds, terriers, buns, and tea." He has cultural conversations with the South Americans and finds his photographer sitting through them "looking like an unplugged lamp." And he tells of a procession when a figure of Christ was borne through the street, the head adorned with a Boy Scout hat, while a band played "I Can't Give You Anything But Love, Baby." The hat was the best available, and the musicians knew no sacred music. The book's rich description should give more insight to the countries he covers than all the annotated guidebooks.

FRENCHMEN, DESIRE, GOOD CHILDREN, by John Chase. Robert L. Crager, New Orleans. $4. A very funny book written and illustrated by the cartoonist of the *New Orleans States* by way of explaining how the streets of New Orleans came to have such names as Calliope, Clio, Erato, Terpsichore, Craps, or even Tchoupitoulas. Mr. Chase's is an irreverent history, if I can dignify it as a history, written in the totally brash, or Earl Wilson formula. It began as a series of lectures and there are traces of the delivered wisecrack scattered through the prose. New Orleans readers will find it frequently hilarious, and it should even be found amusing by the people who consider the most exciting city in the United States to be Philadelphia. —H. S.

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The Film Forum

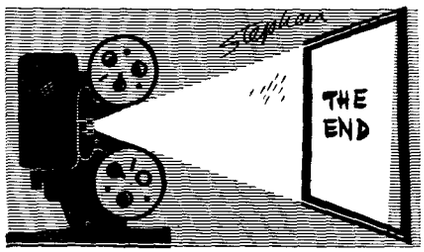
STILL LIFE IN MOTION

***The Saturday Review*'s Weekly Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Both the films reviewed below achieve the illusion of motion through the imaginative use of the camera over essentially static materials. In the case of the film "1848" the flat drawings derive motion from the actions depicted, from the emotional expressions of the pictures themselves, and from the plasticity of the art work, as well as from the actual camera work. Many are sketches and caricatures which have an essentially photographic quality and were published in popular Parisian newspapers of that time,* Le Charivari *and* Le Caricature.

"Picture in Your Mind" is also a series of realistic drawings put into motion by the camera, with the added qualities of color, third-dimensional arrangement of flat figures, and some abstract animation.

Both films provide excellent examples for composing, rather than reconstructing, past history in detail and in larger perspective.



PICTURE IN YOUR MIND

Produced and distributed by the international Film Foundation, 1600 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. Sale price, $150. Rental price, consult your nearby commercial or educational film library. (15 min., color animation.)

"Picture in Your Mind" is a complex approach to the complex problem of man's prejudices. It speaks in terms of some of the best knowledge and thought currently available — stemming from Darwin, the Bible, Freud, and current anthropological, sociological, and political roots. Phillip Stapp, who planned and executed this film and the earlier "Boundary Lines," has forcefully blended color and pictorial form, music, and spoken commentary, in a distinctive manner easily described as "the Stapp technique."

No man is all bad or all good, the film states. And it seeks to find deep reasons for the fears, intolerances, and prejudices which lie behind our immature concepts of other people and of ourselves. And, we can continue, no film is all bad or all good. What strikes us as good about this one? First of all, its courage to have no truck with the comfortable one-point-of-departure routine. If the film does nothing else, it at least acts as an introduction to an interpretation of prejudice as a complex attitude with a complex past.

What's wrong with the film? Despite the fact that almost every scene is artistically and informationally significant, the connectives and transitions are poor—the film does not flow. It leaps backward and forward, it starts and stops, it jumps around. This, I believe, is as much an indication of this generation's shortcomings in dealing with complex ideas as it is an indication of Stapp's shortcomings. He has shown much creative talent in making this film at all, plus a remarkable amount of meaningful sympathy with contemporary problems. The film is at least several steps ahead of most of the rest of us. It is not the answer to all problems involved in our getting along together socially and politically, although occasionally we feel that it attempts to be. It is not a perfect film. And if we come to the film with our own prejudged attitudes about what constitutes prejudice, art, and human nature, we shall almost certainly tend unjustly to underrate it or overrate it.

See "Picture in Your Mind" yourself; see it several times. You'll be able to think of half a dozen ways in which the film might have been improved, clarified, made more meaningful and compact. But bear in mind the fact that this film has made a valuable first attempt to link up many important avenues of thought and knowledge; it has not taken the easy way. And remember to keep an eye out for Phil Stapp's next films.

1848

Produced by Le Cooperative Generale du Cinema Français. Released by A. F. Films, 1600 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y. Sale price, $80. Rental price, consult your nearby commercial or educational film library. (20 min.)

This is a little gem of a film. Taking its visual substance from engravings, etchings, and ink drawings of a contemporary Paris, it revives one year out of a past century with a feeling of historical realness and rightness which the camera has probably never before accomplished. Parisian boulevards, cafés, parks, evening parties, the monarchy and its ministers, financiers, the beggars and hawkers and unemployed, the new railroads, factories darkening the skies, women and children working in coal mines. Unexpectedly the Government is overthrown; the right to work and the right to vote become for a brief moment the new political banner of the nation.

"1848" is easily one of the most recommendable films of the year. There are sure to be others using a similar style, and there is room for more.

—CECILE STARR.

For information about the purchase or rental of any films, please write to Film Department, The Saturday Review, 25 West 45th St., New York 19, N. Y.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC No. 823

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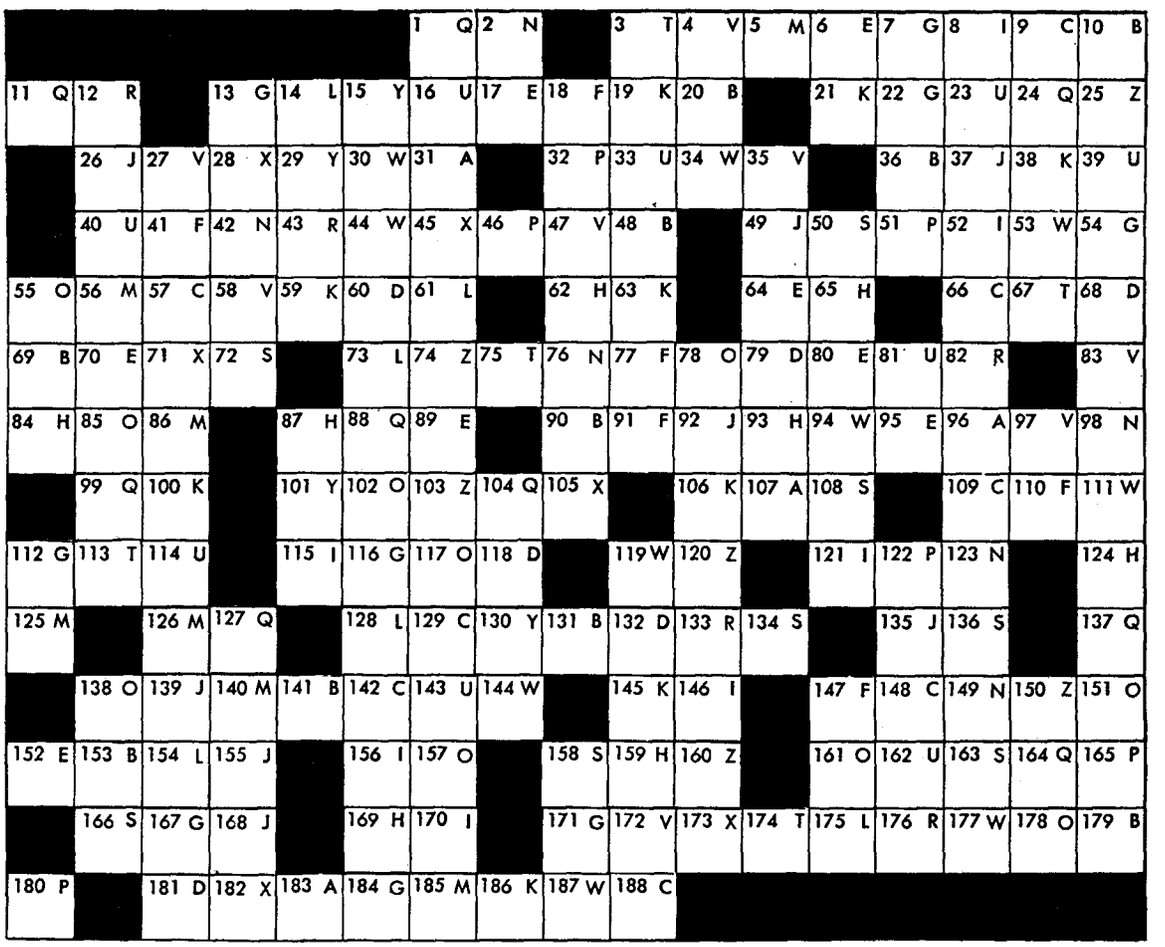
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. French father-in-law of Henry VI of England (called "le Bon").	183 31 107 96
B. Exhibiting the lack of wise counsel (comp.).	10 141 48 131 36 179 153 69 20 90
C. American Unitarian clergyman and essayist (1857-1927; "The Gentle Reader," etc.).	66 129 148 188 9 142 57 109
D. Drink of ale spiced or mixed with spirits (2 wds.).	60 68 118 181 79 132
E. Avoiding (psychol.).	152 80 89 6 64 17 95 70
F. Like the sound of water running over rough stones.	77 91 147 41 18 110
G. A poem written in a wild irregular strain.	171 54 184 116 7 22 167 13 112
H. The bitter or Seville orange.	93 159 62 169 65 87 124 84
I. In impulsive haste (colloq.).	121 52 115 146 156 170 8
J. A military advance into a country (title of book by noted Greek historian).	49 168 139 26 135 92 37 155
K. Chief British naval base in World War I (2 wds.).	63 38 106 59 186 100 19 145 21
L. An existent, whether an actuality, an ideal conception, or the like.	14 175 128 73 154 61
M. Reputed founder of Danish literature (1684-1754; "Peder Paars").	86 125 140 126 5 185 56
N. Any one of the Furies (Gr. relig.).	76 149 42 2 98 123
O. Novel by Gilbert Parker, 1901 (1862-1932).	151 178 138 102 85 55 157 78 117 161
P. The checking of fermentation in the must of grapes, as by adding alcohol.	32 46 51 122 165 180
Q. The honeysuckle ornament in painting or sculpture.	137 11 24 88 127 104 1 99 164
R. One of the principal rivers of the world (W. Africa).	82 176 12 133 43
S. A native accountant or clerk (Anglo-Ind.).	166 50 158 136 163 108 134 72
T. Nobel Prize winner in literature, 1948.	3 67 174 113 75
U. Examines (2 wds.).	114 23 33 39 40 162 16 81 143
V. To permit to drift off by letting out a line (2 wds.; naut.).	4 172 27 97 47 83 58 35
W. Absorptive.	119 111 34 187 53 44 177 94 30 144
X. To discharge (2 wds.).	71 105 45 182 173 28
Y. Mother of Apollo and Artemis (Gr. relig.).	15 130 101 29
Z. Headstrong; opinionated (Fr.).	160 74 120 25 150 103

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 14 of this issue.

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SRL RECORDINGS SECTION

IMPRESSIONS

THE "hit show" principle which "original cast" recordings have tended to follow is giving us less than the best results from this now firmly established adjunct of record making. Broadway, of course, operates on a success formula, but not always by infallible reasoning. All of us who recall the first cool reception of "Porgy and Bess" know that many other factors than merit may determine the length of time such a production may run.

Occasion for this comment arises with the appearance of a "Lost in the Stars" album and long playing record (see page 43) just as Marc Blitzstein's "Regina" is going down for the third time. "Lost in the Stars" will run a considerable time and probably make all concerned a fair share of money; "Regina" is not only a costly non-success, but leaves little trace in durable form of its passing.

I am not contending that "Regina" is an unqualified masterpiece too good for this world. It has many weaknesses, constructional and otherwise, that —taken together—diminish its entertainment quotient. (I conceive of entertainment here in its broadest sense, applying as well to "Death of a Salesman" as to "South Pacific.") Where there is something, at least, that is good in so ambitious and strongly conceived a work, it should be preserved when performers have been rehearsed, an orchestra indoctrinated in the writing, etc. Otherwise the record industry is not giving us a true picture at all of the time in which we live.

That, of course, is not its first function, but it is among them. If the first function is to make money, then things like "South Pacific" and "Kiss Me, Kate," "Lost in the Stars," and "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" suggest that the companies are attending to first things first. But a few dollars of those profits could be expended on half a dozen sides, say, from "Regina" without unbalancing the budget or convicting the guilty executives of more than foresight and a sense of history.

IRVING KOLODIN,
EDITOR, *SRL* RECORDINGS.

JANUARY 1950

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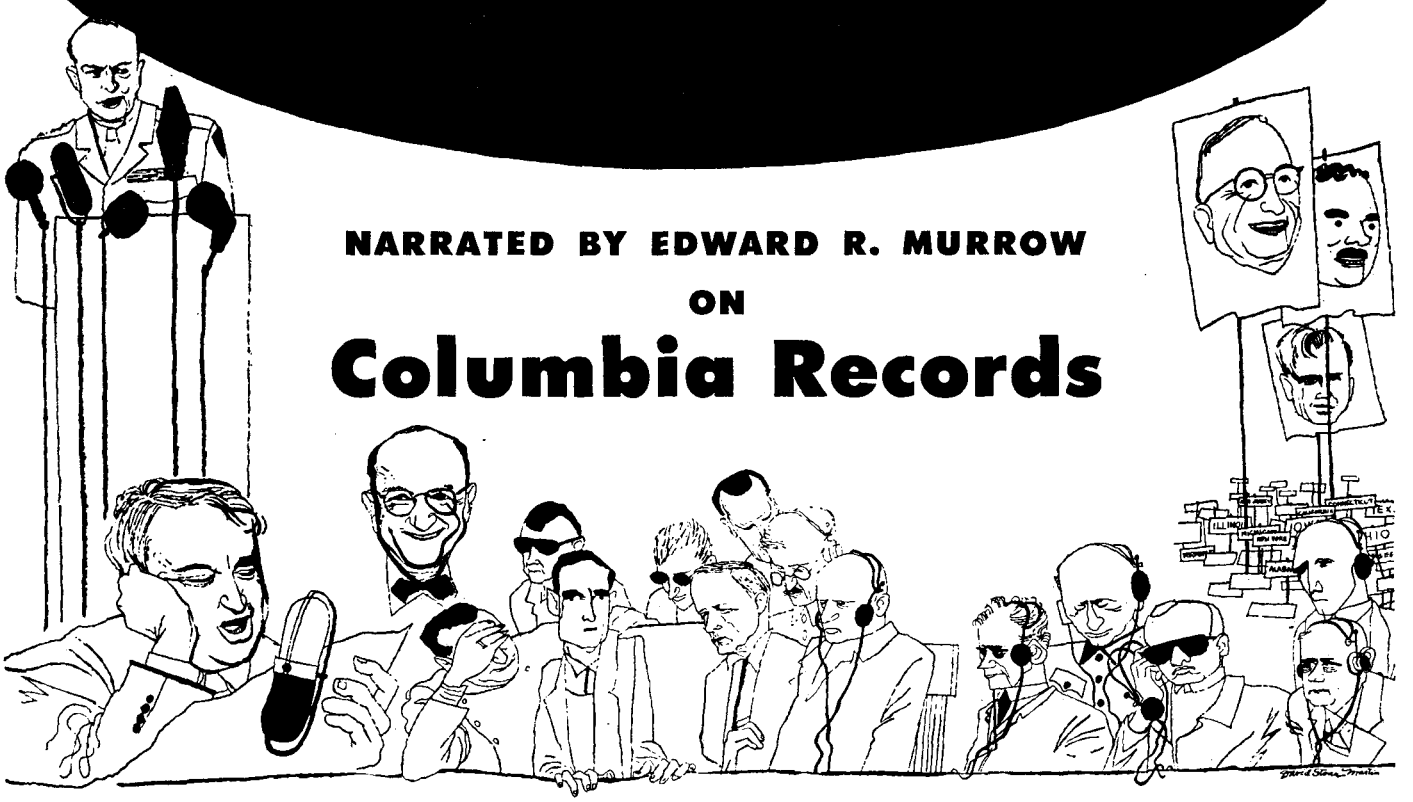

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The Saturday Review of Recordings

Lost in the Stars of Broadway

HAROLD CLURMAN

KURT WEILL'S score for the "musical tragedy" which Maxwell Anderson has made from the material of Alan Paton's novel "Cry, the Beloved Country" is highly satisfactory to the majority of theatregoers now pouring into the New York theatre where it is currently being shown. It is an effective score. This means that it makes Maxwell Anderson's words go down easily. It helps the play's sad tale seem elevating as well as touching. Musically speaking, "Lost in the Stars" is a safe security.

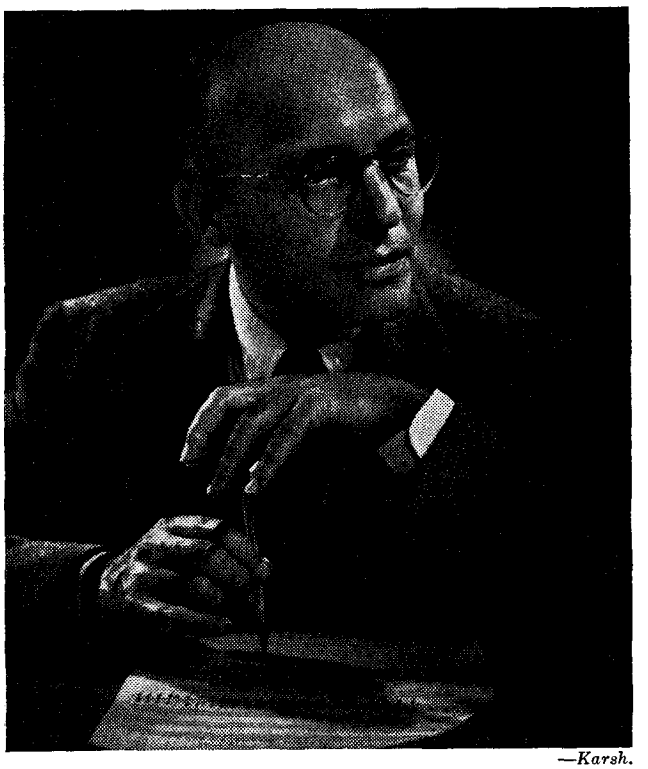
Under the circumstances, it seems almost churlish to question if the songs which compose this solid score are also good music. This is particularly true since the term "good music" is almost impossible to define. The "Lost in the Stars" score is certainly good in that it performs its theatrical function. To those who have seen the play and enjoyed it, the excellent recordings Decca has made of its songs will recall the pleasure of the performance (Decca album DAU 738, $6.75; LP DL 8028, $4.85).

The fact that the music is not particularly original — that it is, indeed, full of obvious reminiscence—is not in itself as damaging as certain connoisseurs would have us believe. From a popular point of view, I am inclined to believe, it is undesirable for a theatre score to be startlingly original. What is wanted in the theatre is a score with a novel twist on the thrice-familiar.

Two things have always characterized the best of Kurt Weill's music. He had the faculty of writing scores every part of which might be proved to lack any striking novelty, but which nevertheless were original in the sense of being *individual*, taken as a whole. The second characteristic of a Weill score was that each section—even the shortest fragment intended to illustrate the briefest bit of action—was written so that it seemed to have the completeness of a little music drama, a thing in itself with a rounded scenic feeling.

The second of these features is still very much one of the assets of Weill's music. No Weill score can be wholly inadequate. On the contrary, it may be safely said that no Weill score can fail to offer a certain degree of satisfaction when the other factors are acceptable. This dependability is an attribute of Weill's unerring sense of the theatre.

But we must come back to the question of the music as music. Though I am vaguely gratified as I listen to "Lost in the Stars," at no time does the music penetrate my consciousness as a living element. It does not stick. It does not add any new quality of feeling to my being. It does not enlarge my awareness.



—*Karsh.*

Kurt Weill—"an adaptation toward an increasingly facile, artistically nondescript goal."

AN artist friend of mine once told me that in judging new paintings he had one infallible criterion by which he could determine their aliveness: he asked himself whether the paintings helped him see the world differently, whether they had in any way transfigured his vision. Is it not our common experience, when we are under the sway of a real creation, that we begin to see and feel in its vein? The world takes on Rembrandt shadows after we have seen an exhibition of his work. Even the anti-Wagnerites in the controversial period of that German composer's day had to admit that it was no longer possible to hear and feel except as people who had dwelled in the Wagner world.

By such a test—and I am convinced that it is valid—the score of "Lost in the Stars" is not good music. It creates no world of its own. It is synthetic, not simply because it has been made of borrowed materials—this is true to some extent of all art—but because its materials have not been informed with a new life. This music is pleasant in general, and true art—even the most abstract—is specific. It always reveals its own inalienable soul.

This brings us to the question of Kurt Weill's career. For, obviously, there would be little point to an extended discussion of the present score were it not the work of one of the most gifted and cultivated musicians writing for our theatre. We cannot forget that Kurt Weill composed "The Three Penny Opera."

It is not my intention to in-

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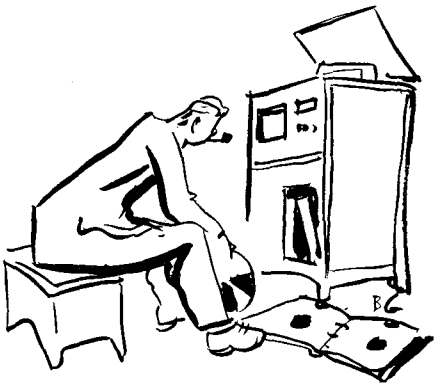
dulge in that other form of critical sadism, which consists of hanging an artist on the hook of his most notable work. I mention Weill's "Three Penny Opera," which, after all, is less known in this country than some of Weill's more recent scores, because it marks a turning point in a career that had an important preceding history as well as a significant later one.

As a student of the great pianist-composer Busoni, Weill began his career as a composer of what many would call highbrow music, that is, music which, to say the least, was not easy. Two factors altered Weill's musical path. He was temperamentally a composer who preferred to write to order for specific occasions (generally speaking, like Mozart) rather than one, like Beethoven, whose work more often than not seemed to be generated by a spontaneous, inner urge. We must also remember that the early Twenties, the point at which Weill's career began, was a period when even the most serious composers turned toward the theatre as a way of reaching a larger and more alert public than was to be found in the perennially conservative concert halls.

THIS impulse might lead a French composer of the time to Diaghilev's fashionable Ballet Russe or a German to slightly dadaistic, occasionally leftish, but certainly unorthodox experimental groups, which combined something of the qualities of the political forum, the artistic cabaret, and eccentric popular tribunes. In such places music could overcome the stuffiness and turgidity or the pained ineffability with which, after Wagner, music became burdened. Music was no longer to be a refuge for solid citizens of slow digestion or for old ladies of both sexes too timorous to face a topsy-turvy world. Music was to go into the market place—laugh, scream, threaten, flatter, amuse, jolt, teach the teeming populace.

Kurt Weill, possessing a keen sense of popular trends, joined in this movement. His associates were lively insurgents among young stage-directors and scene designers as well as the best young poet in Germany, Berthold Brecht. Together they produced a series of tragic shockers or satiric operas bitterly reflecting the diseased society they lived in. Not all these people agreed exactly as to what they were for; they all knew what they were against. It gave them all some sort of emotional line or direction, without which it is extremely difficult for an artist to grow. Out of this movement came "The Three Penny Opera."

It is too little to say that the Brecht-Weill "Three Penny Opera" was a masterpiece of its time. When one hears the score today, it not only lives again with all its old charm, but it takes on added grace through the flatness, the lack of a particular color, which is the dominant characteristic of the present moment. One is not only delighted by the wit of the Weill



score—not to mention the brilliant lyrics—but captivated by its sweet raffishness, its poisonously warm abandon, its drugged back-alley romanticism, its occasional burst of buoyant populism and street-corner bravery. This fundamentally popular score is truly good music. It had an enormous influence in Europe, and in this country, on such composers as Marc Blitzstein.

When Hitler made it impossible for Weill to live in Germany, he migrated to France and then to England. Weill's capacity for change and adaptation evinced in his transfer from the near-Schönbergian mode of his first works to the satirical frivolity of "The Three Penny Opera" displayed itself clearly in his minor essays on the London and Parisian stages. Weill tried hard to be ultra-English and typically Parisian. I have no doubt that had he tried longer he would have succeeded.

When Weill came to this country in 1936 to provide and supervise the score of the Werfel-Reinhardt-Norman Bel Geddes "Eternal Road," he was little known except by musicians who had been to Berlin and by adventurous spirits who enjoyed picking up exotic flowers in odd byways of the entertainment world or on imported records. Among these were the members of the Group Theatre, and though "The Three Penny Opera" had failed on Broadway (1933)—due to inadequate production, insufficient publicity, and bad times—the Group Theatre commissioned Weill to write "Johnny Johnson" with Paul Green.

"Johnny Johnson" was not a success—although it had its admirers. Only one or two of the critics remarked on the original quality of the score, in which Weill managed to combine elements of a peculiarly sensuous and melancholy nature with typically American musical folklore materials—a strange but affecting mixture, superior, in my opinion, to most of what Weill has subsequently written.

Weill is so much the adaptable artist—he is characteristically twentieth century in this respect—that if he were forced to live among Hottentots he would in the shortest possible span of time become the leading Hottentot composer. Broadway isn't altogether Hottentot, but Weill's career since "Johnny Johnson," despite excellent work now and again—always on a high level of craftsmanship—has been an adaptation toward an increasingly facile, I might say, artistically nondescript goal. The result has been—not unnaturally—an ever more conventional musicality, a decline in real quality, and an increase in journalistic praise as well as box-office receipts.

THE score for "Lady in the Dark" was "The Three Penny Opera" diluted with Noel Coward and Cole Porter, but it was cleverly suave and fashionable, cutely tough, glamorous music for a cocktail veranda world at 10:00 P.M. I am unfamiliar with the score of "One Touch of Venus," but no one has recommended it to me. "Love Life" last year had its catchy moments ("Green Up Time") but was hardly as distinguished as the best of "Knickerbocker Holiday" — where Weill tended to mark time by borrowing too much from himself, always a symptom of trouble. "Street Scene" was a smooth amalgam of Puccini, jazz, and Viennese operetta for the purpose of putting over the opera form among those prejudiced against it. Now we have "Lost in the Stars," which is slickly impressive and as basically void as the architecture of our giant movie emporia.

There is nothing wrong in adapting oneself to a new environment, but one must adapt oneself upward rather than downward, that is, to the more challenging and difficult as well as to the simpler and safer. Failing, at least, an occasional effort in the direction of the untried, the hazardous, and possibly even the unpopular, a composer as talented as Weill may find there are forms of liquidation that a composer may suffer other than those of the concentration camps. To develop real roots in a chaos such as ours today, an artist must shape some definite ideal for himself of the kind of world toward which he can aspire.

As well as being drama critic of The New Republic, *Harold Clurman is one of the busier directors on Broadway. He directed "Johnny Johnson," Weill's first score for an American play.*

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Best of the Year—1949

ALARUMS and excursions to the contrary, 1949 has been a year of progress and solid attainment for the record makers of the world, as reflected by the merchandise that has reached our market. Twelve months ago we were consoling ourselves that the 1948 ban was about to end, and there was hope for the future. Part of that future is now past, and the hope has been justified. Twelve months from now, or sooner, the "record war" will also be a part of the past, the asterisks that mark the LP discs in the following compilation then retired from use.

Albums

Orchestral Works

BARTÓK: "Concerto for Orchestra." Reiner (Columbia)* and Van Beinum (London).*

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 2. Monteux (RCA Victor).

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3. Walter (Columbia)* and Mengelberg. (Capitol-Telefunken).*

DEBUSSY: "Images." Ansermet (London).

DVORAK: "Golden Spinning Wheel." Beecham (RCA Victor).

ENESCO: "Roumanian Rhapsody, No. 1." Rodzinski (Columbia).*

HAYDN: "Surprise" Symphony. Schmidt-Isserstedt (Capitol-Telefunken).*

HAYDN: Symphony No. 96. Van Beinum (London).

HINDEMITH: "Mathis der Maler." Hindemith (Capitol-Telefunken).*

HINDEMITH: "Nobilissima Visione." Ormandy (Columbia).*

MENDELSSOHN: "Midsummer Night's Dream" Music. Toscanini (RCA Victor).

MUSSORGSKY: "Pictures at an Exhibition." Ansermet (London).

REGER: "Serenade." Jochum (Capitol-Telefunken).*

RESPIGHI: "Feste Romane." De Sabata (Deutsche Grammophon).

SMETANA: "Bartered Bride" Overture and Dances. Beecham (RCA Victor).

STRAVINSKY: "Jeu de Cartes." Stravinsky (Capitol-Telefunken).*

STRAVINSKY: "Orpheus." Stravinsky (RCA Victor).

TCHAIKOVSKY: "Sleeping Beauty." Stokowski (RCA Victor).

TCHAIKOVSKY: "Pathétique" Symphony. Toscanini (RCA Victor).

TCHAIKOVSKY: "Overture, 1812." Mengelberg (Mercury)* and (Capitol-Telefunken).*

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: Symphony No. 6. Stokowski (Columbia).*

Concerted Works

BEETHOVEN: Triple Concerto. Walter, etc. (Columbia).*

BRAHMS: Concerto for Violin. Renardy and Munch (London).

CHOPIN: Concerto in E minor. Brailowsky and Steinberg (RCA Victor).

FALLA: Harpsichord Concerto. Kirkpatrick (Mercury).*

MOZART: Concerto No. 21 in C. Casadesus and Munch (Columbia).*

MOZART: Concerto for Flute and Harp. Laskine, Le Roy, and Beecham (RCA Victor).

TCHAIKOVSKY: Concerto for Violin. Stern and Hilsberg (Columbia).*

Chamber Music

BLOCH: Quartet No. 2. Griller Quartet (London).

HAYDN: "Sunrise" and "Lark" Quartets. Budapest Quartet (Columbia).*

MOZART: Milanese Quartets. Dessauer Quartet. (Deutsche Grammophon).

SCHUBERT: Octet. Vienna Octet (London).

SCHUBERT: Quintet ("Forellen"). Rupp and members of Stross Quartet (Capitol-Telefunken).*

Vocal

BRAHMS: "Vier Ernste Gesänge." Traubel and Bos (Columbia).*

DEBUSSY: "Five Poems of Baudelaire." Tourel and Reeves (Columbia).*

VERDI, ETC.: Operatic Arias. Pinza (Columbia).*

WEBER, ETC.: "Oberon" excerpt, other arias. Gatti (Cetra).

Operas

BELLINI: "Norma." Cigna, Stignani, etc. (Cetra).*

MASCAGNI: "L'Amico Fritz." Tagliavini and Tassinari (Cetra).*

PUCCINI: "Turandot." Cigna, etc. (Cetra).*

STRAUSS: "Salome" final scene, Welitsch and Reiner (Columbia).*

THOMSON: "Four Saints in Three Acts." Matthews, etc. (RCA Victor).

VERDI: "Forza del Destino." Caniglia, etc. (Cetra).*

WEBER: "Freischütz" excerpts. Müller, Hann, Heger, etc. (Deutsche Grammophon).

Single Records

Orchestral

BEETHOVEN: Leonore No. 1. Van Beinum (London).

CHABRIER: "Fête Polonaise." Monteux (RCA Victor).

COPLAND: "Billy the Kid" excerpts. Stokowski (RCA Victor).

FLOTOW: "Marta" Overture. Fiedler (RCA Victor).

GLUCK: "Alceste" Overture. Furtwängler (Capitol-Telefunken).

SAINT-SAËNS: "Danse Macabre." Munch (London).

STRAUSS: Entr'acte from "Intermezzo." Beecham (RCA Victor).

WAGNER: "Meistersinger" Overture. Mengelberg (Capitol-Telefunken).

Instrumental

FRANCAIX: "Concertino." Françaix (piano) and Borchard (Capitol-Telefunken).

HAYDN: "Divertimento." Primrose (RCA Victor).

LISZT: "Ricordanza." Petri (Columbia).

WIENIAWSKI: "Scherzo - Tarantelle." Menuhin (RCA Victor).

Vocal

CACCINI: "Amarilli." Danco (London).

DOWLAND: "Flow My Tears." Schiotz (RCA Victor).

HANDEL: "Ombra Mai Fu." Ferrier (London).

POULENC: "Metamorphoses." Bernac (RCA Victor).

SCHUBERT: "Lindenbaum." Schlusnus (London).

STRAUSS: "Befreit." Anderson (RCA Victor).

Opera

BIZET: "Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante" ("Carmen"). Steber (RCA Victor).

DONIZETTI: "Fia dunque vero" ("Favorita"). Stignani (Columbia).

LALO: "Aubade" ("Le Roi d'Ys"). Gigli (RCA Victor).

MUSSORGSKY: "Boris" — "Farewell Scene." Raphael Arie (London).

VON SUPPE: "Boccaccio" excerpts. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, others (Capitol-Telefunken).

VERDI: "O Carlo ascolta ("I Vespri"). Schlusnus (Deutsche Grammophon).

WAGNER: "Wahn" monologue ("Meistersinger"). Paul Schoeffler (London).

WEBER: "Wie nahte mir die Schlummer." Lemnitz (Deutsche Grammophon).

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Looking Backwards— Felix Weingartner

C. G. BURKE

PAUL FELIX WEINGARTNER was the first great conductor to inscribe his name on the roster of immortality by means of a recording stylus. He was sixty, in 1923, when he recorded Beethoven's Seventh and Eighth symphonies for English Columbia (non-electrically). Thence until the invasion of France in 1940 he made records with a personal and planned regularity—a regularity illustrated not only in the quantity of his annual allotment, but by a repertory which seldom deviated from the core of symphonic choice and a serene rectitude of interpretation whose maturity is attested by the unvarying resemblance of his 1923 work to that at the time of his death in 1942 and during the interim.

Collectors who today have a choice among a dozen versions of the Seventh Symphony do not readily conceive, unless they were collectors in 1923, how audacious was the pioneering effort which recorded that symphony then. It is true that a truncated job had been done on this work by Albert Coates for HMV shortly before, but excisions were part of the procedure which Weingartner abolished; and in recording without tympani two-thirds of a symphony Coates deserved less than a two-thirds rating in intrepidity. In Germany Nikisch had produced a complete Beethoven Fifth as early as 1914, and seven years later the lamented Eduard Mörike recorded a beautiful "Unfinished." (Can this be called complete?) More typical of the times was Oskar Fried's "Eroica," recorded on four ten-inch sides, one for a movement.

Nor in the United States was the phonograph yet musical. There was a sort of Fifth Symphony, assembled from a first movement minus the repeat of the exposition (Mengelberg), an Andante perpetrated by the Victor Concert Orchestra under J. Pasternack, a Scherzo by the same eminent hand, and the Finale by Toscanini and the orchestra of La Scala. Dr. Pasternack had also given the world the Haydn "Surprise" Symphony and Mozart's G Minor, cutting out what he found superfluous.

Columbia had little, a few fragments of isolated symphonic movements. Victor was the giant: for every Columbia mutilation this company had six. (The level of phonographic culture at that time can be conveyed by a brief glance at an appallingly funny book, "What We Hear in Music," Fifth Revised Edition, 1924, published by the Victor Talking Machine Company and widely distributed to schools and colleges. The following quotation, although incomplete, is otherwise verbatim; it tells the eager student, inimitably, what's what: "Beethoven wrote in all forms; his greatest works are: Overtures . . . 'Mount of Olives.' Mass in D. Opera . . . 'Fidelio.' Oratorios . . . 'Leonore,' No. 2. 'Leonore,' No. 3. 'Egmont.' 'Coriolanus.' Quartets . . . 'Rasoumowsky.' E Flat. D and C." We are still waiting impatiently for a recording of that Quartet in D and C.) Leopold Stokowski, beginning a singular recording career wherein his incontestably remarkable talents have been laxly controlled by a mutable temperament, hesitated (although he is not really a reticent man) to give the public too much. One-third of the Largo sufficed for the "New World" Symphony and half the March for the "Pathétique." Inspired by the Philadelphian's example, Mengelberg compressed two movements of the "Pathétique" into four minutes each. In his small list Toscanini made no excisions; but the Drs. Stransky, Damrosch, Sokolof, and Stock cut. To cut was S.O.P., and no one has ever been able to answer exactly why.

With the appearance of the Seventh and Eighth under Weingartner's stick on English, then American, Columbia, all the old monkey-business stopped as if there had been an order from a central headquarters. Thenceforth, when recordings of major works were made, they were made true to score or apologies were printed for "unavoidable" omissions. (Dr. Stokowski, infected in his way, truly faced about: instead of curtailing standard masterpieces he inserted some ideas of his own.) If we have now a recorded symphonic repertory of greater breadth than any orchestra has been able to encompass in its lifetime, we should remember that Felix Weingartner gave the example first.

When the musical value of his initial recorded repertory was shattered by the impact of electrical recording he started over again, using Beethoven as the center of a production he regarded as forever standard. His legacy includes the nine symphonies, and no other conductor has recorded all. He made the Fifth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth each three times. He recorded his own superb orchestration of the gigantic B flat "Hammerklavier" Sonata, Op. 106, six overtures, the Triple Concerto, some excerpts from "Egmont," and a set of "Viennese Dances." He has left the four symphonies of Brahms and the "Haydn Variations," the "Symphonie Fantastique" and the "Marche Troyenne" of Berlioz, Haydn's "Toy"

After the Concert

By Douglas V. Kane

BRAHMS broke her into tears. The music curved
Back to the silence and its crystal form
Shattered upon the levels of the norm—
The hubbub of the crowd, more crudely nerved.
A cruse of worship, lifted for an hour,
Vapored to opalescence; the still dream
Expanded with its overpowering beam,
Throwing its poppies in a torrid shower.

Only within the nerves the music lingered;
Rainbows of flame whirled through the agile mind—
Flute blown, and viol swept, and octave fingered
Had flung their fertile sparks into a wind
Pressured with beauty, till her heavy years
Fell like gray walls to greet the peace of tears.

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Symphony and Mozart's No. 39. He was the first to record Mendelssohn's "Scotch" Symphony and one of a score to make the "Siegfried Idyll," the "Rienzi" Overture, and Liszt's E flat Concerto. Bach's Third Suite, two of Handel's concerti grossi, three Strauss waltzes, and the delectable trifle known as Boccherini's Minuet help compose the most conservative recorded repertory of any conductor.

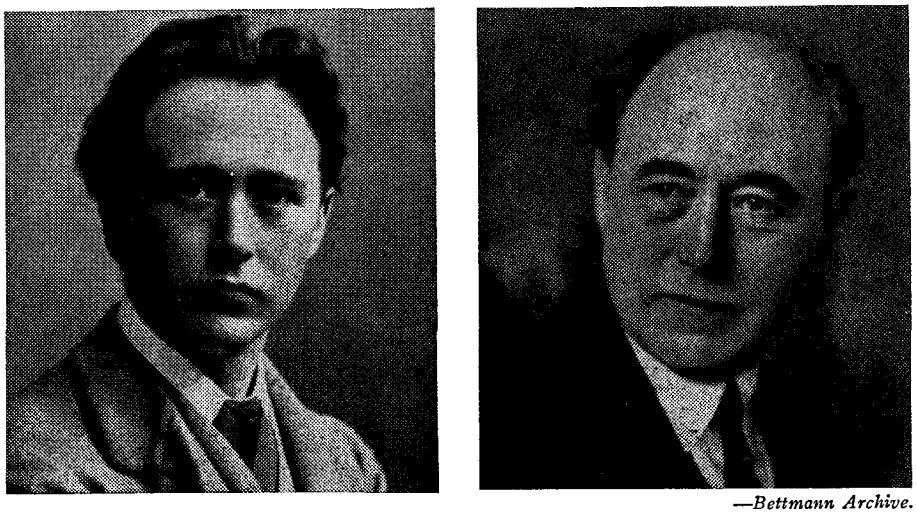
This man represented ideally a moribund civilization already strange to us, when notoriety and fame were not confounded. Racially a German, he was not a German national. Born in Zara in 1863, when Dalmatia was part of Franz Josef's empire, his allegiance was claimed by the Dual Monarchy, but he studied (philosophy) in Northern Germany and his young successes (in music) were there. When Zara was awarded to Italy that country and the Austrian republic disputed his nationality, which induced him to accept citizenship in Switzerland, repository of all nationalities. He was knighted by the Emperor William II but discouraged use of the particle "von," which indicated the condition. He conducted throughout Germany and on the Continent, and abroad was particularly esteemed in England. His essay "On Conducting," declaring principles to which he always adhered, and his famous study of "The Symphony Since Beethoven" prepared audiences for a scholar and a servant of music. At the outbreak of war in 1914 Nikisch, Muck, and Weingartner were the world's preeminent conductors. Weingartner was invited to America, which invited only the most famous, but he was not invited again after the war, when his renown began to decline before the fierce competition of postwar virtuoso conductors, many of them gifted and many dazzling with chromium-plated personalities.

Our unpliant man was never called a virtuoso by anyone. That epithet, expressive at once of admiration and contempt, was ludicrously inapplicable to the lean, serious, handsome, and ascetic figure who had no antics and no public private life, whose realization of a symphonic score was the obliteration of Felix Weingartner and the assertion of L. van Beethoven. In a period when a first performance was of more note than a good one, Weingartner resisted the rush for new scores because he could play well only those he understood, and much that was being written then he could not understand. He was a sturdy, capable composer, whose long list of works had never conquered a large public, but he did not encumber his programs with compositions of his own.

The list of Weingartner records currently available from Columbia is representative, if not wholly satisfactory. He tried to perpetuate his art through discs and have his name remembered, as Bruno Walter and Sir Thomas Beecham are doing now; as Fritz Busch has probably succeeded in doing with the Glyndebourne Mozart; as Arturo Toscanini has been trying to do under the handicap of an inappropriate environment; as Leopold Stokowski could have done had his great ability been properly disciplined. What is left from Felix Weingartner?

THE Nine Symphonies are the most substantial column of his monument. The forty-two discs of the final editions may be found listed in the Columbia catalogue, save for those comprising one of the best: the "Pastorale." Each is a standard, and in this opinion no conductor of the half-century's experience maintained so steadily so high a level of interpretation as Weingartner in all nine. It is not imaginable that rival versions may not be found to challenge or surpass his excellence in some of them. Thus the Toscanini First is a stout competitor and the Beecham Second is in a class alone. The old Mengelberg Third was one of those performances which made a great conductor out of this fellow, and the unrecorded Toscanini broadcast of this year is perfection. The Fourth remains Weingartner's, and the Fifth his or Furtwängler's, or perhaps Toscanini's stupefying and incomparable effort, which is also uncomfortably close to burlesque. In the Sixth no one else on records has quite realized Weingartner's lyrical serenity. The very old Seventh by Stokowski and the first movement of this by Toscanini are above the Weingartner level, but there is neither an Eighth nor a Ninth to excel his.

His mastery was in analysis, expressed primarily in his phrasing, then in his proportion. Having estimated the essential quality of a work, he tried ever afterward to express exactly this without forcing the notational framework built by the composer. The great care with which he unfolds a phrase is inconspicuous because the curve and stress are always apt. Nothing is exaggerated, and in the spontaneous flow the tight hand is not felt. The rebellious resignation of the wonderful *andante cantabile* in the Ninth is moving as only the records can describe it in an interpretation achieved by the simple avoidance of strong emphasis. The patterns of the turbulent finale of the Seventh are so cleanly articulated that its rhythmic frenzy is the logical culmination of the preceding movements, when it is often in other hands their chaotic rejection.



—*Bettmann Archive.*

Felix Weingartner circa 1890 and 1927—"a moribund civilization when notoriety and fame were not confounded."

What of the recordings as such? Well, the last were made in 1939. His records were always standard quality for their time, and technically they are dated in proportion to their age. Those of the last three years are pretty good: the Brahms Second and Third are excellent. For one listener the Beethoven Eighth and Ninth by Weingartner are still the favored listening in spite of their technical deficiencies.

Thousands of us, through the phonograph, were molded to Beethoven and Brahms by the records of Felix Weingartner. Most of those thousands never saw him, and have no knowledge of him except through his conducting of half a dozen European orchestras on discs. The officials at English Columbia who chose him for the work he did deserve acknowledgment of their taste and discrimination. Their choice was amazing: with chromium-plated men available on every side, their prescience selected the phonograph's first Great Man.

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Recordings in Review

Piggy banks not depleted by Christmas giving are likely to be unresisting against such new and welcome issues as Bartók's "Music for String Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta," a first recording in years of Brahms's F minor piano sonata, the first ever of Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm" Variations and "Second Rhapsody," Schumann's "Fantasia," and the remarkable long playing discs of the late Rosita Renard's recital in Carnegie Hall last January.

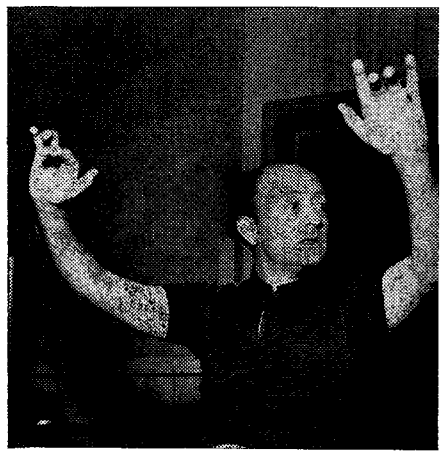
California Bartók

BARTOK: *"Music for String Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta." Harold Byrns conducting the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony.* (Capitol album 8048, $5.; LP 8048, $3.85.)

Situated as it is in California, it may be that Capitol's domestic enterprises in the field of serious music will reflect some of the local intense interest in contemporary composition. That, certainly, is the implication of the first notable enterprise of the sort to come our way: nothing less than the first recording anywhere of the remarkable work of Bartók called "Music for String Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta."

By no means a "new" work of Bartók—it precedes all the works of his American period, which have already been recorded—it is just beginning to find friends for its unquestionably uncommon qualities. In concept a kind of chamber music (with the percussion and celesta used as much melodically as rhythmically), it does not accord with any ordinary form of concert-giving, though Leonard Bernstein has performed it several times as guest conductor with symphony orchestras and has it listed for his forthcoming Philharmonic engagement. Thus it is especially welcome in recorded form, where the non-urban listener may absorb it at his convenience.

Absorb it one must, for it is not subject to the cursory considerations by which music is usually judged: its movements have their tempo designations (Andante, Allegro, Adagio, Allegro) but not any ordinary sequence. A xylophone beat, a glide on the chromatic timpani, a series of piano chords have no meaning in themselves, only in the context of what precedes and follows. Conductor Harold Byrns has a good grasp of the essentials of the score, and the Los Angeles Chamber Ensemble does its work capably. I do not hear in this performance quite the incisiveness or the sharpness of contrast remembered from other performances, but the worth of the enterprise is unquestionable. The LP



Harold Byrns conducting Bartók—"especially welcome [for] the non-urban listener."

(ten-inch, double-sided) I heard was excellent in definition of timbres and instrumental clarity, if a little dry in tone.

The Greatest C Major

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 7 in C. Willem Mengelberg conducting the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra.* (Capitol-Telefunken album 8039, $7.15; LP 8040, $4.85.)

To the two exceptional versions of Schubert's C major Symphony we have had in the last two years (by Walter and Toscanini) is now added a third—and, appropriately enough, the greatest I have ever heard either on records or in the concert hall. I say "appropriately enough," for it has been reposing someplace in obscurity for almost a decade yet retains the power of thought, the intensity of feeling to supersede the best done since then.

I never heard Mengelberg play this work in concert, nor previously on records, which left me full of anticipation and no preconceptions. To my taste, it combines in remarkable proportions the best of the lyric performances I have heard (Walter's) and the most of the dramatic (Toscanini's). To be sure, it has some blemishes, as what performance of this enormous work has not? But the occasional fussiness of phrasing in the slow movement, a little super-exuberance in the Scherzo are less distracting than the sometimes lax accentuation of Walter or the consistently overdriven accent of Toscanini. Certainly one would conclude from this playing that Schubert is one of the greatest of symphonic composers, and who could say more, or less?

Even more than the "Eroica," this is an amazing preservation of the shape and sound and atmosphere of a Mengelberg performance. The strings are clean and true, the brass forceful and bright in timbre, the whole mass of sound impactful and clamorous when necessary. My LP jumped grooves several times within an inch of the beginning; it was otherwise well-behaved. The separations are perfectly managed: two movements to a side.

Pianos, Mostly Forte

BRAHMS: *Sonata in F minor (Opus 5). Julius Katchen, piano.* (London LP 122, $5.85.)

SCHUMANN: *"Fantasia" (Opus 17). Rudolf Firkusny, piano.* (Columbia album 862, $5.71; LP 4238, $4.85.)

MENDELSSOHN: *"Variations Sérieuses," etc. Rosita Renard, piano.* (Gramophone Shop LP, $10.70.)

GERSHWIN: *"Second Rhapsody," "I Got Rhythm" Variations, etc. Oscar Levant, piano, with orchestra conducted by Morton Gould.* (Columbia album 867, $4.52; LP 2073, $3.85.)

PROKOFIEV: *Piano Concerto No. 3. William Kapell, piano, with Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati.* (RCA Victor album 1326, $4.; 45 rpm, $3.35.)

Why the twelfth month of the forty-ninth year of this century should produce this burst of five piano performances—mostly good, and all interesting—is almost as unanswerable a query as the next one. Why are we so lavishly favored with works which the catalogue so sorely needs? It will probably not happen again till the twelfth month of the ninety-ninth year, so let us all be properly grateful.

Most gratitude should go to London for providing us not only with the fine Brahms F minor Sonata, (whose only previous phonograph interpreters have been Percy Grainger and Harold Bauer) plus the brilliant talents of young Julius Katchen, but also a model of what the piano should sound like on LP. There is virtually none of the slight wowing in sustaining tones that mars almost all previous discs of similar material (see RECORDINGS Oct. 1949, *in re* Albeniz). The bass is firm and rich, the treble bright and without clang. Also this is

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about the quietest-surfaced London LP we have yet had.

As for Katchen—now twenty-three—this is remarkable, mature performance, technically assured, musically comprehending, full of color and detail. Neither version previously mentioned compares with it for fidelity of sound, of course, but it is even more remarkable that Katchen plays the broodingly romantic slow sections with an almost perfect balance of insight and detachment. They never cloy or melt, no small achievement in this kind of writing.

Firkusny's "Fantasia" is a fascinating partner to the previous release, for it was almost surely the work most constantly in Brahms's mind as he wrote the sonata. It has, perhaps, an even greater largeness of line, more variety of moods and styles of expression with which the performer must cope. Firkusny has much sympathy with the style and a considerable part of the equipment required to express it. However, there are more than a few points technically blurred or rushed in execution. Both for its generally excellent attack and well-balanced reproduction (there is more than a little of the wowing mentioned above) it may be commended, with the qualification that a recent Edwin Fischer (HMV) version has not yet been heard in this country.

Those who insist on fidelity of reproduction as basic in phonographic pleasure will not share the enthusiasm of some of us for the album which perpetuates a recital given in Carnegie Hall last January by the Chilean pianist Rosita Renard. But those who cherish deeply-felt music-making, full of vigorous thought and personal warmth, are advised that Miss Renard's playing of the Mendelssohn "Variations Sérieuses," the B flat Partita of Bach, two works of Mozart (the A minor sonata, K.310 and the Rondo in D, K.485), and Ravel's "Valses Nobles et Sentimentales," are of the finest, despite an occasional cough or rattle in the background.

Why, may one ask, is not an artist worthy of this attention invited to repeat the performances on commercial discs? For the simple reason that Miss Renard, who had a curiously intermittent career in and out of her native Chile between 1919 and 1949, died last May just as this Carnegie Hall recital would have launched her, at fifty-five, in a new phase of international prominence. Listening to her Mendelssohn is to hear the kind of flow and coloring the best conductors give to the "Italian" Symphony; her Bach has a wonderful independence of hands, fastidiously combined; her Ravel is rhythmically alert, tonally abundant. Nor is this kind of Mozart playing heard from more than a handful of contemporary artists.

Altogether it is a rich experience, faithfully reproduced, plus a freshness of projection not often achieved in the studio, and the acoustics of Carnegie Hall a further point of favor. The coughing and other noises intrude most in a series of ten Chopin Etudes which are least well played. Had the records been processed immediately, they would have been quieter in the commercial results, but they were not regarded as irreplaceable until Miss Renard's sudden death (from encephalitis) prompted the Society of Friends of Music, Bogotá, to issue these two long playing discs through the Gramophone Shop, 18 E. 48th St., New York. I'd call them unique.

Unique in another way are the first issues of two Gershwin works, unfamiliar to most concert-goers or radio-listeners: the "Second Rhapsody" and "Variations on 'I Got Rhythm.'" Oscar Levant has here done more than a service to the composer he interprets with so much zest, liveness of feeling, and stylistic point. He has enriched our listening experience with more of the bright rhythms, charming melodic ideas, and gay turns of thought which were uniquely Gershwin's. The usually disparaged "Second Rhapsody" turns out, on actual familiarity, to be a rounder if not so brilliant piece of music as its more famous predecessor, with a melodic surge all its own. And the "Variations" on Gershwin's much varied tune are perhaps the most sophisticated music he ever wrote, the product of studies to extend his musical resources early in the Thirties, shortly before "Porgy and Bess." It is all absolutely enjoyable music, played with fervor and style. Morton Gould's direction is equally fine, the recording well managed, despite a not too good piano. Levant's previous issue of the "Preludes" has been brought together as added matter on the "Variations" side.

Rudolf Firkusny — "much sympathy with the style and a considerable part of the equipment."

Whether Kapell's playing of this concerto means the permanent banishment of Prokofiev's own historic recording from the RCA Victor catalogue, I cannot say, but it certainly shouldn't, admirable a job as he has done. Certainly there is a place in the phonographic archives for as faithful a transcript of the composer's intentions as Prokofiev achieved, and it should be assured by the copyright owners. Otherwise, this is certainly the best version of the work now available, cleaner in sound and more detailed in execution than the generally good one by Mitropoulos which Columbia issued some months ago. Kapell's feeling for the style is highly developed, and with Dorati's capable assistance, he clarifies more than a few points which previously sounded obscure. The 45 rpm is one of the best RCA has given us.

Noels by a Distaff Chorale

BRITTEN: *"Ceremony of Carols." Robert Shaw conducting the RCA Chorale of Women's Voices.* (RCA Victor album 1324, $4.75; 45 rpm, $3.35.)

It is heartening to see the appreciation of a good work, such as Britten's "Ceremony of Carols," implemented by the vast resources of publicity and distribution possessed by RCA Victor. It is less heartening to observe a treatment which accords with the great American penchant for expediency (that is to say, the use of an available women's choir, rather than the more desirable boys' voices) leading, inevitably, to critical dissatisfaction.

Were there no other version of this imaginative treatment of traditional carols, with harp accompaniment, one might enter into the holiday spirit of things and say, with Tiny Tim, "God bless us every one." But somebody at RCA must surely know that there is an English Decca (now London) version of this same work which rings much more true for the use of the Morriston Boys Choir. Maria Korchinska is hardly a more gifted harpist than Laura Newell, and Ivor Sims as choirmaster impresses less than Shaw. But the sound in the English instance is disembodied, airy, sexless; in the American, palpable, thickish, all too plainly incongruous.

For those with no choice, the Shaw version of Britten's fabric of tonal pleasure will be a source of enjoyment, but the total result is much like Mozart's "Marriage of Figaro" Overture played on two pianos.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Reports on Classical Releases

See Page 57 for Pop Report

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 (in D), Op. 36. Pierre Monteux conducting the San Francisco Symphony. RCA Victor album 1325, $6.; 45 rpm, $4.30.	Probably the all-round best version of this work now available, showing the same general agreement with the Beecham conception already expressed by Reiner and Koussevitzky. The recording is superior to any predecessor, lacking only the LP factor for an unqualified endorsement. Otherwise without peer for rhythmic clarity and melodic continuity.
Beethoven: Concerto in E flat, No. 5 ("Emperor"). Clifford Curzon, piano, with the London Philharmonic conducted by George Szell. London LP 114, $5.85.	Superbly integrated ensemble performance, with Curzon's energy and Szell's scholarship in perfectly complementary relation. As playing of the music it comes closer to the Schnabel level than the Serkin does, and is also a better LP than the latter. At that, it has its blemishes: pitch wavers at one or two points, plus an incomplete splice midway in the last movement. Bright, sometimes brittle sound; excellent acoustic background.
Beethoven: Sonata in C, Opus 53 ("Waldstein"). Claudio Arrau, piano. Columbia LP 2078, $3.85.	About the best of Arrau known to me on discs; compact, assured execution of a valid, well-phrased conception of the work. It holds up well throughout, including the final intricate Rondo. Better than average piano recording, especially for LP.
Beethoven: Irish and Scotch Songs. Helen Traubel, soprano, with Coenraad V. Bos, piano, John Pennington, violin, and Warwick Evans, cello. Columbia LP 2085, $3.85.	A choice selection of Beethoven settings of these songs, sung with fine art if a little ponderousness of manner by Miss Traubel. So much voice tends to overwhelm violin, cello, and piano when so placed. Included are the familiar "Robin Adair" and "Auld Lang Syne" as well as "Sad and Luckless Was the Season" (a precursor of "The Last Rose of Summer") and "The Soldier" (to which Tom Moore is also indebted).
Berlioz: "Reverie and Caprice," Opus 8. Joseph Szigeti, violin, with Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. Columbia 72869, $1.25.	Despite the early opus number, this dates from the end of the 1830's, and thus postdates a good many of the works by which Berlioz is best known. Many of the characteristic qualities of the composer are evident in a moody work suggestive of the "Carnival Romain" overture, the "Ball" scene of the "Fantastique" symphony, and various parts of the "Romeo" music. Expectably comprehending performance by Szigeti, perfectly augmented by Lambert's knowing direction of the orchestra. First-class recording, but the domestic shellac surfaces are fuzzy indeed. Both companies, incidentally, have been remiss in this recently.
Debussy: "Children's Corner." Leopold Stokowski conducting his Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor album 1327, $4; 45 rpm, $3.35.	The André Caplet orchestrations, redone in a de Lux (well-soaped) version, as contrasted with a mere de luxe edition. Very stylish and a little precious direction for works of this well-defined character. Admirably balanced, well-colored reproduction.
Mahler: Symphony No. 1. Dimitri Mitropolous conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Columbia LP 4251, $4.85.	All of Mahler's works gain by any application of cohesion, whether supplied by a conductor or an uninterrupted recording process. This is the established phonographic version of this work—and a fine one—expanded by the LP process into a new dimension of interest and usefulness. The strings are somewhat shrill (Northrup Auditorium, as usual), the sound otherwise well represented.
Mendelssohn: "Rondo Capriccioso" (in E, Opus 14). Ania Dorfman, piano. RCA Victor 12-1020, $1.25.	Swift-moving, sure-fingered execution by Miss Dorfman of a work which she is admirably equipped to play. Clear, brilliant reproduction of the piano sound. With it, somewhat irrelevantly, is a Beethoven "Ecossaises," without benefit of separating grooves. What price selectivity, RCA?
Puccini: "E lucevan le stelle" ("Tosca"). Giuseppe di Stefano, tenor, with orchestra directed by Alberto Erede. RCA Victor 12-1018, $1.25.	Vibrant, if lean, tenorizing by Di Stefano with the recording mechanics imparting a force to his voice it does not really possess. The sparkling sound in the overside "De' miei bollenti spiriti" from "Traviata" is a better likeness of the fine lyric voice possessed by Di Stefano. Admirably balanced, spacious recording from the HMV studios.
Stravinsky: "Russian Maiden's Song." Nathan Milstein, violin, with Artur Balsam, piano. RCA Victor 12-1017, $1.25.	Good stylistic distinction by Milstein between this simplicity and the complexities of Wieniawski's "Mazurka in D" on the overside. Expert execution combined with mechanical assistance of the first order. Particularly vivid results on the 45 rpm.
Verdi: "Parmi veder" ("Rigoletto") and four other arias, plus Flotow, Bizet, etc. Richard Tucker, tenor, with orchestra. Columbia LP 4248, $4.85.	Tucker's transition from the status of a very good tenor to a great one is almost accomplished in this disc, which couples several previously-issued airs—"La donna è mobile" and "Questa o quella" from "Rigoletto", "M'appari" from "Marta," in particular—with others less familiar. Included in the latter category are "La vita è inferno" and "O, tu che in seno" from "Forza del Destino," magnificently sung with a blend of richness, power, and freedom. The orchestral accompaniments directed by Emil Cooper, Wilfred Pelletier, and Fausto Cleva are uniformly good, as is the wide-range, admirably balanced recording. Skip the "Mamma, quel vino" from "Cavalleria"; it's the old, dullish Tucker.
Villa-Lobos: "Choros, No. 10." Werner Janssen conducting the Janssen Symphony Orchestra. Capitol LP 8043, $3.85.	Another phonographic first-time for Werner Janssen, whose applaudable specialty seems to be recording scores no one else knows about. This is a thoroughly impressive work in Villa-Lobos's primitive manner (Stravinsky's "Firebird" apparently lives in the same jungle), powerfully performed and sonorously reproduced. The chanted chorus is a guaranteed cure for any indifference to contemporary music. Fine recording here and in the overside excerpts from "Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 2." Listening to the vibrant life and dazzling power of these creations, one can only conclude that Villa-Lobos is the greatest musical imagist yet produced in the Americas. The "Aria on a Song of Our Country" has some of the quality of the famous "Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 5" though an anonymous saxophone has hardly the compulsion of Bidu Sayao. The recording is the best of domestic origin yet offered by Capitol. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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CAPITOL-TELEFUNKEN

Latest Recordings of the Great Musical Performances of Europe

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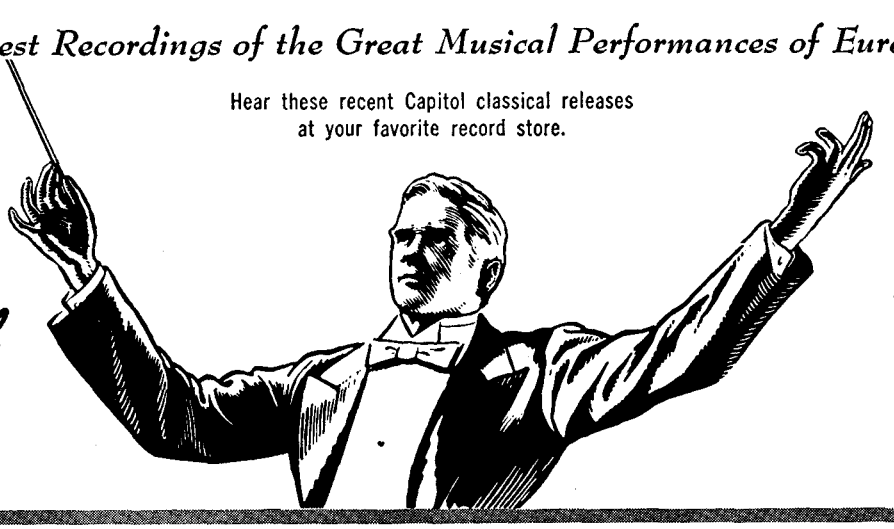
at your favorite record store.



Capitol RECORDS HOLLYWOOD

CAPITOL'S MARK OF MUSICAL MERIT

LATEST ALBUM RELEASES

TCHAIKOVSKY—Symphony No. 5 in E Minor
Mengelberg—Berlin Philharmonic—33⅓ rpm, $4.85

BRUCKNER—Symphony No. 5 in B Flat (original version)
Eugen Jochum—Hamburg Philharmonic—Two 33⅓ rpm records, $9.70

DVORAK—Concerto in A Minor for Violin and Orchestra
Georg Kulenkampff, violinist; Eugen Jochum conducting Berlin Philharmonic—33⅓ rpm, $4.85

DVORAK—Serenade for Strings, Op. 22
Hans von Benda—Chamber Orchestra of Berlin Philharmonic—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35

VIVALDI—Concerto Grosso in A Minor, Op. 3, No. 8
Mengelberg—Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch.—78 rpm, $3.75; 45 rpm, $2.40

RESPIGHI—Antique Dances and Aria (Suite No. 3)
Hans von Benda—Chamber Orchestra of Berlin Philharmonic—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35

FRANCAIX—Concertino for Piano and Orchestra
Jean Francaix at the piano;
—Serenade for Twelve Instruments
Eugen Jochum—Hamburg Chamber Orchestra—33⅓ rpm, $3.85

WALTON—String Quartet in A Minor
Hollywood String Quartet (Felix Slatkin, Paul Shure, Paul Robyn, Eleanor Aller)—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35; 33⅓ rpm (includes Villa-Lobos' "String Quartet No. 6"), $4.85
(A CAPITOL CLASSIC)

LATEST SINGLE RELEASES

SIBELIUS—Finlandia
S. Eckerberg—Göteborg Symphony—78 rpm, $1.25; 45 rpm, 95¢

D'ALBERT—Tiefland (Excerpts)
Anita Gura, Carla Spletter, sopranos; Peter Anders, tenor; Hanns Heinz Nissen, baritone—78 rpm, $1.25; 45 rpm, 95¢

R. STRAUSS—Di Rigori Armati from "Der Rosenkavalier" and
RIMSKY-KORSAKOV—Hindulied from "Sadko"
Peter Anders, tenor—78 rpm, $1.00; 45 rpm, 95¢

OTHER OUTSTANDING CAPITOL-TELEFUNKEN RELEASES

BACH—A German Organ Mass (Third Part of the Klavierübung)
Fritz Heitmann at Charlottenburg Palace Organ—78 rpm, $8.75; 45 rpm, $6.20; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

SCHUBERT—Symphony No. 7 in C Major ("The Great")
Mengelberg—Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch.—78 rpm, $10.00; 45 rpm, $7.15; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

FRANCK—Symphony in D Minor
Mengelberg—Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch.—78 rpm, $7.50; 45 rpm, $5.25; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

MOZART—Eine Kleine Nachtmusik
Erich Kleiber—Berlin Philharmonic—78 rpm, $3.75; 45 rpm, $2.40; 33⅓ rpm (includes Haydn's "Symphony No. 94"), $4.85

BRAHMS—Symphony No. 3 in F Major, Op. 90
Eugen Jochum—Hamburg State Orchestra—78 rpm, $6.25; 45 rpm, $4.30; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

R. STRAUSS—Ein Heldenleben
Mengelberg—Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch.—78 rpm, $7.50; 45 rpm, $5.25; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

STRAVINSKY—The Card Game (Jeu de Cartes)
Stravinsky conducting Berlin Philharmonic—78 rpm, $5.75; 45 rpm, $4.25; 33⅓ rpm, $3.85

BRUCKNER—Mass in E Minor
Max Thurn—Choir and Orchestra of Hamburg State Opera—78 rpm, $7.50; 45 rpm, $5.25; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

HINDEMITH—Mathis der Maler
Paul Hindemith conducting Berlin Philharmonic—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35; 33⅓ rpm, $3.85

REGER—The Böcklin Suite, Op. 128
Keilberth—German Philharmonic of Prague—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35; 33⅓ rpm, $3.85

OUTSTANDING CAPITOL CLASSICS

BARTOK—Music for String Instruments, Percussion and Celesta
Harold Byrns—Los Angeles Chamber Symphony—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35; 33⅓ rpm, $3.85

GLIERE—Symphony No. 3 in B Minor (Ilya Mourometz)
Jacques Rachmilovich—Santa Cecilia Academy Orch.—78 rpm, $8.75; 45 rpm, $6.20; 33⅓ rpm, $4.85

GLAZUNOV—Symphony No. 4 in E, Op. 48
Jacques Rachmilovich—Santa Cecilia Academy Orch.—78 rpm, $5.00; 45 rpm, $3.35; 33⅓ rpm, $3.85

VILLA-LOBOS—Choros No. 10
Werner Janssen—Janssen Symphony with Los Angeles Oratorio Society—78 rpm, $3.75; 45 rpm, $2.40; 33⅓ rpm (includes excerpts from Villa-Lobos' "Bachianas Brasileiras" Suite No. 2), $3.85

*As to 33⅓ rpm records, prices shown are suggested for record, package and excise tax, complete, excluding State and local taxes—for all other records, add excise tax. All prices are subject to change without notice.

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HITS AND MISSES

THE Biblical injunction that one's closet is the place for praying has always struck us as carrying considerable force against the great tradition and usage of public prayer. In this connection, we have never been particularly impressed by public performances of "The Lord's Prayer" as set to music by a composer named Malotte. The setting is mellifluous, but there remains the whole question of its propriety in the first place. However, the colored jazz singer Sarah Vaughan has recorded this work with such warmth and delicacy of expression, such loveliness of tone and thoroughgoing musicality —marred only by a bit too much vibrato—that we can recommend the disc to anyone interested in the way in which true lyric artistry can work against really formidable obstacles in the matter of material. On the other side, Miss Vaughan does beautifully with the great spiritual "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" (M-G-M 10592, 60¢).

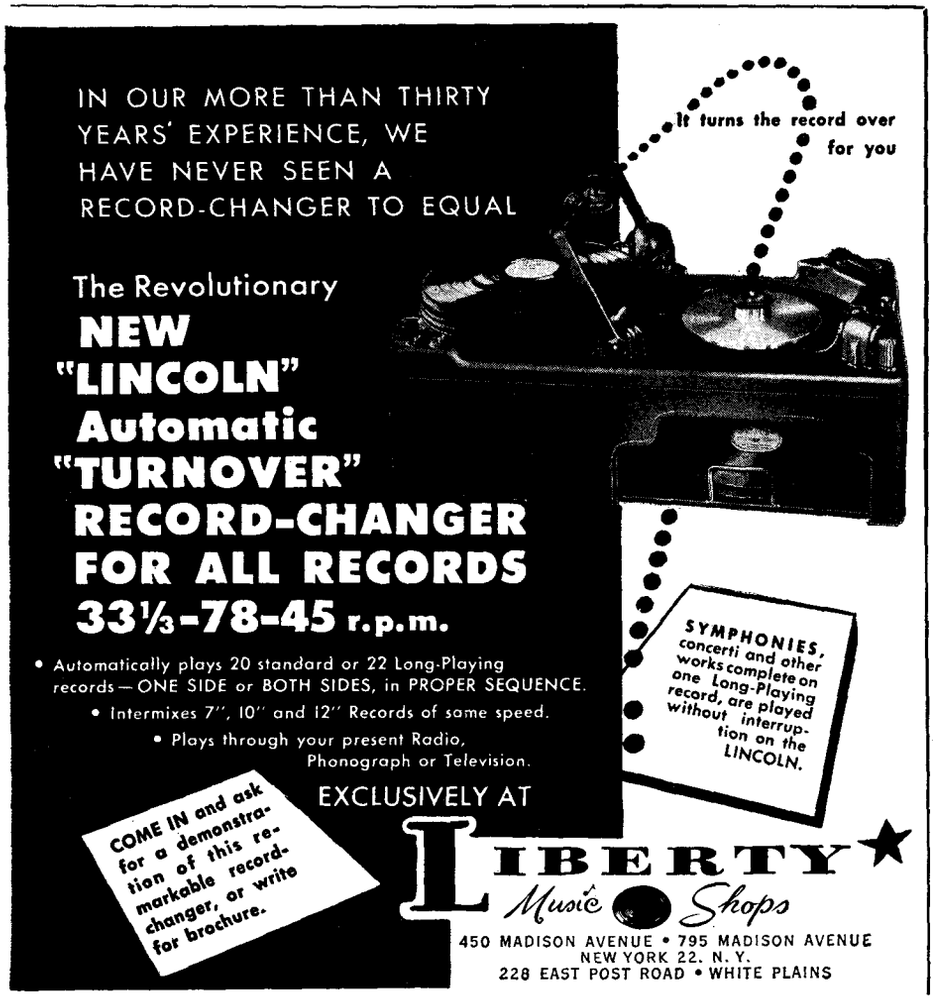
Attractive records have come to us in two musical categories about which we know very little. As a conservative fox-trotter with occasional dervish impulses, we have never felt the magic of square dancing, but we have been soundly seduced by two numbers of Russell Taylor, accompanied by Richie Jones's square-dance band. Whether "Wagon Wheel" and "Sally Goodin'" would be approved by the Diaghilevs of the square dance movement we have no way of knowing, but the calls therein are full of natural charm and poetry, and the fiddling is at all times light, elastic, and propulsive (Capitol 57-40267, 75¢). Another type of music largely foreign to us is the *mariachi*, or informal street band playing of Mexico. But we have no difficulty with Roberto G. Rivera's "Pobre del Pobre" (The Doleful Poor) and "El Ranchero" with *mariachi* background (Capitol 57-56706, 75¢). Mr. Rivera's selections are simple and touching, his voice is dulcet and well adapted to them, and his background includes delightfully spontaneous counter-melodies on the cornet—a sort of Mexican equivalent of the way in which the late Joe Smith used to go to work behind the blues singing of Bessie Smith. These Mexican matters have nothing like Bessie Smith's power, but they have quality.

In recent months the idea men of popular music have obviously racked their brains for fair. From the musical show "Texas, Li'l Darlin'" comes a number, "Big Movie Show in the Sky," with lyrics by Johnny Mercer, which began to give us the staggers the moment we spun the turntable. It is the conceit of Mr. Mercer, a conceit possible only to a man drenched with the spirit of Hollywood, that the Day of Judgment will consist largely of a super-colossal motion-picture spectacle, presumably at Jehovah's Oriental, in which all will be obliged to witness the kind of performances they gave on earth. This unnerving concept is illustrated with due force by Blue Barron's Orchestra (M-G-M 10594, 60¢), and on the reverse is an item called "Mr. Disc Jockey (Play Our Love Song Again)" which really carries modern principles too far. Heavy creative thought has also gone into "The Iowa Indian Song," which avoids a certain amount of critical comment by referring, itself, to tall corn. It is played, with tribal whoops and brays, by Claude Thornhill's orchestra, and affords a first-class chance to rival the raucous, states'-rights music of their brothers from Texas (RCA Victor 20-3604, 75¢).

Brass-band addicts, among whom we are firmly enrolled, will almost certainly enjoy "Hometown Band" by Art Mooney's orchestra, with a ripsnorting Dixieland episode thrown in for good measure (M-G-M 10588, 60¢). Pearl Bailey offers another of her irresistible efforts in "Saturday Night Fish Fry" (Columbia 38660, 60¢). Here she is joined by Jackie Mabley, who has almost as much gusto as la Bailey herself. It would be marvelous to occupy the world suggested by these girls in their music—a world where the wagon is coming, but arrest will clearly be as delicious as everything else. Pleasure of a less intense sort is to be found in Margaret Whiting's rendition of her father's "Ain't We Got Fun" (Capitol 57-783, 75¢), a sentimental occasion for oldtimers, and the responses in this case are provided by none other than Bob Hope.

The latest album of one pianistic hero is called "Frankie Carle Meets the Masters" (Columbus C-193, $3.15). The masters are Tchaikovsky, Donizetti, Albeniz, Mozart, Schubert, Grieg, Beethoven, and Chopin. They are met on Frankie Carle's own ground, and it is hard to imagine them objecting to his blithe paraphrases. He has too much taste to pinch where it would hurt.

—WILDER HOBSON.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Recordings for the Young

THE PROGNOSIS for children's recordings for the new year is encouraging. Young People's Records, Inc., has for some time been making excellent contributions to the field; with greater experience its records may improve in quality. Of considerable interest is the Little Nipper Series of RCA Victor. Under the leadership of Steven R. Carlin, RCA Victor has inaugurated this new series, discarding many old inferior recordings and releasing new productions instead. Previously RCA Victor often produced children's recordings from the sound tracks of films. In the new series there is better integration between the story and sound. Musical background is continuous and sound effects are less obvious and less distracting.

The improvement in the albums themselves is notable. The colorful and tasteful illustrations are excellent and follow the stories closely. In several of the albums the complete text of the story is printed so that children may follow it as the recording is played. These features, combined with sturdy album construction, greatly enhance the value of the series. I have heard the Little Nippers listed below and can recommend all of them.

BAMBI. (RCA Victor Y 391, three 10″ unbreakable, $4.04.)

Shirley Temple tells the story of the life of Bambi, the deer, and tells it charmingly. Music and sound effects are excellent. Threes to eights will love it. The album is nicely illustrated.

DUMBO. (RCA Victor Y 382, three 10″ unbreakable, $4.04.)

Dumbo, the baby elephant with big ears, becomes the sensation of the circus by learning to fly. Exciting circus background. Several good character traits are subtly portrayed. Children three to eight will be enchanted by Shirley Temple's narration and the music.

THE LITTLE ENGINE THAT COULD. (RCA Victor Y 383, two 10″ unbreakable, $3.57.)

The little engine could and did pull the Toyland Special from Hither to Yon. Excitement and fun for children from three to eight. Comical illustrations. Complete text is printed in the album.

PINOCCHIO. (RCA Victor Y 385, two 10″ unbreakable, $3.57.)
Reviewed in RECORDINGS Dec. 1949.

WORKING ON THE RAILROAD. (Young People's Records 427, one 10″ unbreakable, $1.45.)

A dramatic treatment of the building of American railroads. Tom Glazer and the Gene Lovell Chorus sing several good railroad songs effectively. Excellent for sevens to elevens.

THE NEIGHBORS' BAND. (Young People's Records 726, one 10″ unbreakable, $1.45.)

A story about four musicians who play a trumpet, a French horn, a trombone, and a tuba at cross purposes until a little boy gets them together in a band. Walter Hendl's music has a modern punch and is charming. Children from seven to eleven should like it.

THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE ANTS. (Capitol album DBX 3034, two 10″ unbreakable, $3.67.)

Don Wilson tells the story of the improvident grasshopper in his usual excellent style. Rather pleasant fiddle playing, but some of the sound effects are unfortunate. Suitable for children from four to eight. Includes an illustrated reader.

—CHARLES LEONHARD.

● LLP-114 $5.95 — 12″ Red Label
CONCERTO No. 5 IN E FLAT MAJOR, OP. 73 ("The Emperor") (Beethoven)
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Conducted by GEORG SZELL
SOLOIST: CLIFFORD CURZON, Piano

● LLP-122 $5.95 — 12″ Red Label
SONATA IN F MINOR, OPUS 5 (Brahms)
JULIUS KATCHEN, Piano

● LLP-3 $5.95 — 12″ Red Label
A BERLIOZ PROGRAM
Romeo and Juliet
Romeo's Reverie and Fete of the Capulets • Queen Mab Scherzo • Scene D'Amour (Love Scene)
Les Troyens
Royal Hunt and Storm
THE PARIS CONSERVATORY ORCHESTRA
Conducted by CHARLES MUNCH

● LPS-89 $4.95 — 10″ Red Label
SYMPHONY No. 40 IN G MINOR (K.550) (Mozart)
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Conducted by ERICH KLEIBER

● LPS-54 $4.95 — 10″ Red Label
SYMPHONY No. 101 IN D MAJOR ("The Clock") (Haydn)
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE
Conducted by ERNEST ANSERMET

● LPB-125 $3.95 — 10″ Blue Label
MUSICAL COMEDY FAVORITES
JUBILEE—Begin The Beguine (Cole Porter) • ANYTHING GOES—I Get A Kick Out Of You (Cole Porter) • VERY WARM FOR MAY—All The Things You Are (Jerome Kern) • ROBERTA—Smoke Gets In Your Eyes (Jerome Kern) • REVENGE WITH MUSIC—You And The Night And The Music (Schwartz-Dietz) • CONNECTICUT YANKEE—My Heart Stood Still (Rodgers & Hart) • SOUTH PACIFIC—Some Enchanted Evening (Rodgers and Hammerstein) • KISS ME KATE—So In Love (Cole Porter) • SOUTH PACIFIC—Bali Ha'i (Rodgers and Hammerstein) • KISS ME KATE—Why Can't You Behave? (Cole Porter)
STANLEY BLACK and His Orchestra

● LLP-103 $5.95 — 12″ Red Label
LIGHT ORCHESTRAL FAVORITES
Hungarian Dances Nos. 1, 3 & 5 (Brahms) • Slavonic Dances Nos. 3, 5, & 8 (Dvorak) • Gayaneh-Sabre Dance (Khatchaturian) • Turkish March (Mozart) • Toreador Et Andalouse (Rubinstein) • Berceuse De Jocelyn (Godard) • Pas Des Fleurs (Delibes)
CLEMENS KRAUSS Conducting THE LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
VICTOR OLOF Conducting THE NEW PROMENADE ORCHESTRA

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Some Highs and Lows

CONGLOMERATION OF DISAGREEMENT

GLANCING at back issues of this department one may measure the tempo of recent phonographic history by the necessary recurrences here of familiar subjects—made unfamiliar again in a matter of months by the rush of new development. "What playing equipment shall I use?" Here it is 1950, and only a short year ago the single-speed changer was the standard answer, the two-speeder scarcely heard of, the "plays-all-three" models of fabulous present fame an unthinkable complication. There were only two speeds then.

"Shall I try a three-speed changer?" Possibly. But look about first. Note well that last spring's brand-new two-speed models, replaced by the triple-play numbers, are now officially obsolete and consequently can be had at bargain sale prices. Obsolete or not modelwise, they may outperform their three-gaited successors in a number of respects, thanks to simpler design problems. They are in no sense actually out of date except in the lack of a third speed. Unless you plan to acquire stacks of seven-inch popular records you'll find that two speeds will serve remarkably well to cover your needs for the future. The single-speed changers of scarcely earlier date are an even better bargain and can serve as an excellent complement to one or another of the separate player units now cheaply available for other speeds. Right now is the time to snap up a good bargain of this sort, especially those with provision for magnetic cartridges such as the GE or Pickering.

Given the need for three speeds, why isn't the compact three-speed automatic changer, using one arm, one motor, one mounting for all records, an ideal answer? Those who have tried for themselves know the answer. Honest miracle that it is, the three-gaited automatic is a triple threat to most people's peace of mind simply because the variables among records are too many. Leonardo himself couldn't devise a simple and foolproof machine that would automatically cope not only with three speeds but with three sizes of records variously distributed among the speeds, two groove sizes (meaning two needle points) similarly distributed, two center-hole sizes, and even with two thicknesses in the case of competing seven-inch records! The solutions to this nightmare of disagreement have been varied and unfailingly ingenious, and the efforts of designers and manufacturers truly heroic. The machines, even so, are incredibly complicated. It took me a good half hour to figure out how to play "all three" on one of the best of these (and was I red-faced?) after I had recommended it to a lady. She was, shall we say,

sweetly baffled. I strongly suspect that most three-speed models spend their lives through force of circumstance as two- or even one-speed cripples, for lack of the requisite mechanical genius on the part of their owners. I do not, therefore, feel that the three-speed changer is the ideal solution to the problem of practical home universality.

But there is one excellent argument in favor of the triple changer that nullifies just about every objection to it. It is a mass-produced, standard-stock item, widely available, familiar to servicemen, and hence easily repaired; and it is sold at a mass-production price. Since the three-speed changer will be in front of your nose wherever you look, you'll probably get one in the end.

Let's haye the gumption, however, to look at least at the practical home alternatives. Skip, for the present, the home-built players assembled from loose motors, arms, and cartridges; they will be grist for a later milling. I suggest that a combination of several stock commercial units, unwieldy as it may sound, is actually an easy and effective way to simplify life for yourself.

If your present standard-speed playing equipment is of retiring age, then jump first, I'd suggest, for that two-speed changer in the bargain basement (some of them have provision for *manual* playing of 45's as well). If you are pleased with the present sound from your standard, old-style records, then by all means acquire the Columbia LP player attachment, at $9.95, to solve most of your problems and cover virtually the whole of the new expansion in the classical field. Or try the GE LP player, same price—this one needs a preamplifier. Be sure it has the new GE stylus (RECORDINGS Nov. 1949). These don't change—but with half-hour LP sides, a changer is a lazy man's luxury. With your standard records played peacefully and simply on one machine and your LP's on the other you'll make no mistakes and suffer no confusion. Just put 'em on and play 'em. A simple switch takes you from one player to another.

Coping with the third speed poses another angle. The RCA 45's are best dealt with separately because of their large center holes. The little RCA changer is widely available but the very similar 45 rpm changers put out by other companies on the RCA model are a better bet because their crystal cartridges are of standard size, permitting replacement with wider range cartridges if desirable, whereas RCA's own player takes a special off-size cartridge. The RCA machine is small enough not to get in the way even though it be your number-three player. A three-way switch, to choose the player you want, is no worse than a two-way one. Believe me, life in the three-speed era *is* at its simplest this way! Try it and see.

So far in avoiding the triple-speed changer we've orphaned one type of record, the Columbia seven-inch single. It will play manually on the LP player attachment but it lasts only the standard short length. If you plan to use many of these you might profitably study, as an alternative to the RCA changer, Webster-Chicago's little "Duo-Seven," exactly the same size, same mounting holes, but it changes all seven inchers, RCA and Columbia, with good mechanical smoothness, including the velocity trip which starts the change as soon as the needle hits the eccentric lead-away grooves. However, as with most big three-speed changers you'll have to put individual "spider" inserts in the RCA records, to make the center hole small enough.

—EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)

LONDON.

TWO recordings of somewhat minor Russian pieces are featured by HMV, Rachmaninoff's rather incoherent First Piano Concerto, pleasantly played by Moiseiwitsch and the Philharmonia Orchestra under Sargent, and Ippolitov-Ivanov's picture-postcard "Caucasian Sketches" (including the picturesque and popular "Procession of the Sardar"), Nicolai Malko securing competent playing from the Philharmonia.

One of the most remarkable works in all chamber music is surely Schubert's G major Quartet, Op. 161. Nowhere else does he come so near to the concentration and intensity of Beethoven's later quartets. The Hungarian Quartet has now recorded this most exacting composition and there is much to be said for their fine playing and HMV's clear and full recording. Yet the Hungarian's performance lacks the inner glow which was to be found in the Busch and Kolisch sets; so anxious are these players to avoid sentimentality that they appear to fight shy of sentiment. Another quartet recording marks a notable double debut of the South African woman composer Priaulx Rainier and the Amadeus Quartet, undoubtedly the most promising team formed in this country since the Grillers. Miss Rainier's Quartet No. 1 is a short work (one side for each of its four movements) showing refreshing originality without being in any way bizarre. It makes one look forward with great interest to further works from her pen. Decca's recording does great service to the composer and to her youthful interpreters. From the Amadeus Quartet we pass to Mozart, to be precise to his famous A major Sonata ("Turkish March"), which is played with wooden tone, insensitive phrasing, and misapplied rubati by Backhaus, a pianist who is certainly no longer the force he once was.

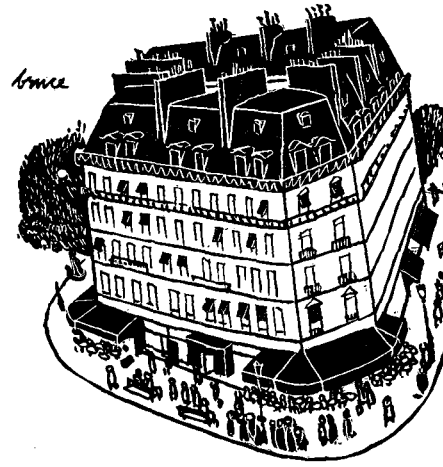
The vocal field is fairly bare. Irmgard Seefried sings with charm, but with insufficiently clear diction, the aria "Auf starken Fittige" from Haydn's "Creation," beautifully accompanied by the Vienna Philharmonic under Krips and well recorded by Columbia. On HMV Margherita Carosio gives us one of her best records to date, when, accompanied by an unnamed but splendid orchestra under Erede, she sings "Prendi, prendi" from Donizetti's "L'Elisir d'Amore" and "Tutte le feste al tempio" from "Rigoletto"; Victoria de Los Angeles once again entrances us with two Spanish songs, Valverde's "Clavelitos" and "Farruca" by Turina; finally there is a seasonal touch in the lovely aria "Slumber, Beloved" from Bach's "Christmas Oratorio," sung very pleasantly but without much imagination by the young British contralto Marjorie Thomas.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

THOSE with the wherewithal can now obtain from local import shops the two-record set of Darius Milhaud's ballet music "L'Homme et Son Désir," which won first honors in the annual French disc competition last year. I put the case in this fashion, for these Champrosay records in a flimsy paper container strike me as being more than a little overpriced at $8.50 the set; but collectors of modern French music and of Milhaud in particular may well be glad to settle for "L'Homme et Son Désir" at any price, since it is a seldom-played score not likely to be recorded again under more economical auspices. A product of the composer's diplomatic days in Brazil during World War I, "L'Homme et Son Désir" shows Milhaud in a far different guise from the later, more genial fabricator of the "Suite Provençale." For a musical commentary to a ballet depicting smoldering passions in a jungle setting Milhaud has devised some extraordinary tonal effects with twelve solo instruments, fifteen percussions, and a vocal quartet which intones wordless sounds. Without benefit of stage action, however, this murky and frenzied music does not hold its own too well as a continuing claim on the listener's attention.

Since it usually takes the combination of Bach and Casals to convince most of us that an unaccompanied cello is worth the listening, I approached a recent French recording of Zoltan Kodály's Sonata for Unaccompanied Cello with considerable trepidation. An unwarranted apprehension it turned out to be, for by the end of the first side it was evident that here was music of uncommon interest and playing of amazing virtuosity. If Janos Starker sounds as impressive in the concert hall as on these records, we can be assured that the days of great cellists are not yet over. A varied yet constantly controlled tone, an uncanny technique capable of double stopping as if it were the merest child's play, a keen sense of melodic inflection and rhythmic flow—these are the attributes which, if the present records indicate fairly, put Starker in the topmost rank of cello virtuosos. Kodály's music is, as always, dyed in brilliant Hungarian colors, and it exploits just about every technical feat of which the cello is capable. Listening to side 7 of this set, it is hard to believe that one instrument alone could be responsible for so complex a musical fabric. From the technical standpoint, this recording (by Pacific) blasts more than it should.

The past four years have witnessed four different recordings of Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G*, a hopeful sign that the record-buying public is ceasing to focus so much of its attention on Grieg and Rachmaninoff. From Deutsche Grammophon comes a performance by Monique Haas and the NWDR (Nord-West Deutscher Rundfunk) Orchestra under the direction of Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. A comparison between it and the RCA Victor recording by Leonard Bernstein illustrates how antithetical two interpretations of the same score can be. Bernstein lays great emphasis on the jazzy, Gershwin-like aspects of the concerto. His rhythms, phrasing, and particularly his orchestral balances differ so markedly from the more traditional, straightforward



reading of Haas and Schmidt-Isserstedt that it is almost like hearing a different composition. Though Bernstein occasionally borders on the boisterous, there is a vitality and meaningful drive to his performance which the other quite misses. For Bernstein, the music is obviously expressive of much more than mere scintillation. Scintillation pure and simple, however, has never been more magnificently reproduced than in the German recording—a touchstone of brilliant, three-dimensional fidelity.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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MUSIC

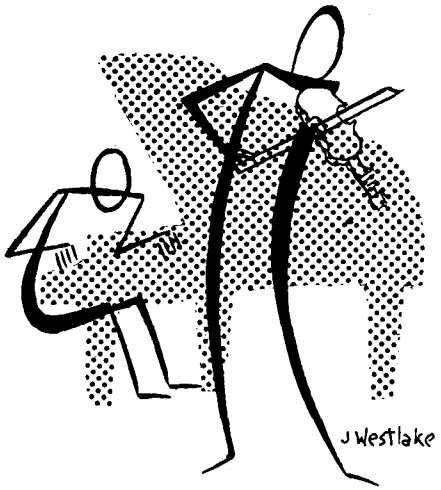
(*Continued from page 25*)

musical analysis. The author is a Parisian composer of Polish birth and a proselytizer of the most fervent order. He doesn't give a tinker's dam for any post-Wagnerian music save that of the Schönbergian persuasion; and he is firmly convinced that Schönberg and company are the sole inheritors of Western musical tradition. That tradition he sees as basically polyphonic, and it is an important task of this book to demonstrate how Schönberg, Berg, and Webern at once return to traditional polyphony and extend it. In the course of his argument Leibowitz analyzes every major work of these three composers — a parsing which may be useful to trained musicians but goes way beyond the depth of the lay listener. Untutored readers will only scratch their heads in dismay as Leibowitz insists on the logic and cohesion of music which has always impressed them as the *ne plus ultra* of amorphous incoherence.

Modern music appears more genially in Nicolas Slonimsky's **Music Since 1900** (Coleman-Ross, $7.50), a new edition of a book originally published twelve years ago. The bulk of this 700-page volume is given over to a "Descriptive Chronology: 1900-1948," which offers one of the most remarkable storehouses of information ever put between the covers of a book. Births, deaths, first performances, and other events of musical significance are duly entered under appropriate dates, from the publication of the initial volume of Breitkopf & Härtel's complete edition of Berlioz on January 1, 1900, to the first performance of "Recordare," by Lukas Foss, on December 31, 1948. This mass of fact is enlivened both by Slonimsky's trenchant descriptions and by shrewdly chosen excerpts from contemporary publications. The author is a lover of the *date juste*, and delights in catching other reference works with their chronological pants down—something which he seems to do on every other page.

Master Musicians

Any collection of books by various authors is bound to have its ups and downs. What makes The Master Musicians Series noteworthy is the high percentage of ups. Each of these volumes begins with the biography of a composer, proceeds to a critical analysis of his major compositions, and ends with several appendices, among which are always a good bibliography and a catalogue of works. Illustrations—both pictorial and musical—are also included. The pub-



lishers, Pellegrini & Cudahy, have recently taken over American distribution of these British books, and at $2.50 each are offering excellent value. Having been inundated with fourteen of these critical biographies, this department is faced with a reviewing problem of no mean dimensions. Fortunately for us, nine were previously issued in this country by E. P. Dutton, and we shall use that as an excuse for doing no more than listing the titles and authors: **Mozart,** by Eric Blom; **Schubert,** by Arthur Hutchings; **Tchaikovsky,** by Edwin Evans; **Elgar,** by W. H. Reed; **Palestrina,** by Henry Coates; **Purcell,** by J. A. Westrup; **Wagner,** by Robert Jacobs; **Dvorak,** by Alec Robertson, and **Beethoven,** by Marion Scott.

Of the five volumes brought out here for the first time, we have had an opportunity so far to read two: **Bach,** by Eva Mary and Sydney Grew, and **Brahms,** by Peter Latham. Mr. and Mrs. Grew were faced with an Olympian task in dealing with Bach's tremendous musical output in less than 250 pages. They have got around the difficulty by concentrating on his life and on his cantatas and organ works, apparently feeling that his other music, being better known, stands less in need of analysis. Any system of rationing will bring forth grumbles. Our complaint is that the Grews make only passing references to the "Well-Tempered Clavier" and "Passion According to St. Matthew." We don't think any book about Bach should make short shrift of these masterpieces. Otherwise, the Grews have done a more than serviceable job, especially in painting a picture of the provincial German milieu in which Bach lived. They put Bach's maximum earnings at no more than seventy pounds a year. Now, are we to convert this figure at the prewar rate of about five dollars to the pound, the more recent pound of $4.04, or at the present devaluation of $2.80? Bach, who was always very precise about pecuniary matters, would take a dim view of the way his earnings can fluctuate in the popular view. At all events he was surely one of the world's most grossly underpaid men.

Peter Latham's treatment of Brahms is in accord with the generally held mid-twentieth-century estimate of that composer, which refuses to grant him equal standing in a triumvirate with Bach and Beethoven. The author finds much to admire in Brahms, but his book does not indulge in the unrelieved panegyric which was fashionable when so many of the standard works on Brahms were being written. Latham views Brahms as "an apostle of the middle way," and in developing this thesis he has written a perceptive and very readable book.

Bos at the Piano

Brahms was in the audience when his last composition, the "Vier Ernste Gesänge," received its first performance in the spring of 1896. The baritone of that occasion, Anton Sistermans, has long since passed from the scene, but the accompanist, Coenraad V. Bos, is still very much with us. In collaboration with Ashley Pettis, Bos has written **The Well-Tempered Accompanist** (Presser, $2.50), a slim volume which we commend to all accompanists, singers, and devotees of the lied. Tradition jumps at you from every page—not just a sentimental, atmospheric tradition, but the real bedrock kind which cites chapter and verse to explain exactly how nineteenth-century lieder composers intended their songs to be performed. Flighty organization and occasional inconsistencies can be excused in a book which sets forth so much valuable information.

World Survey

Large histories of music seem to appear with almost yearly regularity. The latest is **Music of the World,** by Kurt Pahlen (Crown, $5), a history which begins in the ancient world and continues right up to "South Pacific." Though fully aware of the problems which attend covering so extensive a subject in 400 pages, we cannot take too kindly to any history which devotes two pages to Bruckner and less than one sentence to Satie, which is topical enough to record the death of Richard Strauss but neglects to mention any composition of Stravinsky postdating 1933, and which actually describes the slick Khachaturian as "a radical composer." Perhaps we're just allergic to too much Pahlen.

—ROLAND GELATT.

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Recordings Reports on Current Pop Releases

PERFORMER, SONG, DATA	REPORT
Basie, Count: "Dance Parade." Columbia LP CL 6079, $2.85.	Assorted examples of the Basie style, ranging from "Danny Boy," tenorishly intoned by Bob Bailey, to "Lonesome Miss Pretty," an original in the old, good style of the band. Not very exhilarating, but well played on the whole.
Dorsey, Jimmy: "Johnson Rag." Columbia 1-426, 60¢.	Old-fashioned "white" jazz, reborn as "Original Dorseyland" music through the talents of Charley Teagarden, trumpet; Cutty Cutshall, trombone; Ray Beauduc, drums; Dick Carey, piano, and Dorsey himself on clarinet. Brightly spirited performance of the venerable "Johnson Rag," one of its first recordings in this era. Claire Hogan is the vocalist here. However, there is no trace of "Charley My Boy's" vocal on the other side: in fact, no trace of "Charley My Boy."
Flanagan, Ralph: "Where or When." Bluebird 30-0016, 49¢.	Rich voicing by Flanagan of his saxophones and trombones gives us one of the first authentic "new" sounds in dance-band scoring since Glenn Miller's manner, of which this is plainly a derivation. With the likable Rodgers and Hart tune is "Dear Hearts and Gentle People," which is neither Rodgers nor Hart, but reasonably likable.
Jeffries, Herb: "The Shepherd." Columbia 1-398, 60¢.	Return engagement of the pastorale philosophy espoused in the lower-case manner by eben ahbez; not as penetrating as "Nature Boy," but no more undistinguished. Jeffries operates with full aid of orchestra, choral group, flute, and "vox humana" voice.
Kirk, Lisa: "Confidentially." RCA Victor 20-3610. 75¢.	Is there no better material available for Miss Kirk's talents than this tritely tuneless item or the fake "Western" matter on the overside? Even the orchestra doesn't play as if it liked them.
Rose, Dave: "Leave It to Love." MGM 30220, 75¢.	A more than average tune played with a good deal more than average imagination by Rose, a vocal group, and an excellent, unnamed solo vocalist. The style is suave, the mood relaxed, the over-all production neatly turned. The overside, "When the Wind Was Green," suggests a burlesque of a "heavy" musical-comedy number by Cole Porter, but I don't suppose it is.
Sinatra, Frank: "Lost in the Stars." Columbia 1-427, 60¢.	I can't agree that Weill's title song from his current success has much to do with "Lord God," but it is an uncommonly fine tune and beautifully sung by Sinatra. As usual, the background by Axel Stordahl is contrived with a high degree of musical intelligence, and delivered with taste. "The Old Master Painter" shares similar attributes on the overside, without Weill's notable line.
Vaughan, Sarah: "You Say You Care." Columbia 1-394, 60¢.	Another one of the month's cantatas, a setting of this excerpt from "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," which suggests the influence of Prokofiev's "Alexander Nevsky." Between choral bursts Miss Vaughan intones the charming tune with lots of feeling. The overside, "I Cried for You," is more typical Vaughan, meaning a crawling up and down the scale, occasionally touching the notes of the familiar tune.
Vaughan, Sarah: "Lonely Girl." Columbia 1-385, 60¢.	Better success here for the Vaughan method, possibly because the tune is less familiar than "I Cried for You," and the digressions are not so distracting. "Fool's Paradise," on the reverse, is again in the choral manner, but Miss Vaughan gets to sing more often. Doubtless an oversight in the arrangement. Excellent recording.
Whiting, Margaret: "Sorry." Capitol 57-776, 75¢.	One of the better moments from the minstrelsy of the Twenties, with a performance whose qualities are not unrelated to the relationship of the singer, Margaret, to the Richard Whiting who wrote it. He was her father. Affectionate work throughout, though wasted on the companion side—unless you believe "The Sun Is Always Shining Somewhere, Driving the Clouds Away."

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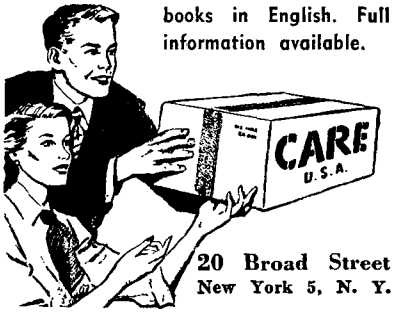

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

First Beecham?

SIR: I would like to inquire about an alleged "first" by Beecham and the Royal Philharmonic of Mendelssohn's "Fair Melusina" Overture. In the December 1948 issue of RECORDINGS this was listed in a section called "Recent or Forthcoming English Releases." . . . So far, no "Melusina." . . . I have neither seen the recording reviewed nor come across it in any stores in this area.

JOHN A. WHITE.

Boston, Mass.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The information supplied by our English correspondent doubtless came from a list of works which had been recorded but not necessarily approved. Sometimes, also, approved records are delayed when a step in the processing cycle is held up. In any case, the question shall be put to Sir Thomas when he returns to New York from his Texan journey, and an answer provided.*

More "Bachianas"?

SIR: The December 1949 RECORDINGS lists Sayao's "Bachianas Brasileiras, No. 5" as the second most "outstanding" disc of the past twenty-five years. I daresay that the others would be enormously popular also, if available. Have heard No. 1 and it's terrific. Are the others recorded?

H. S. BASAYNE.

San Francisco, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *If No. 1 is terrific, as reader Basayne says, why haven't we had it? The next point is that two portions of No. 2 have just been made available on a Capitol long playing disc—see page 50—performed under the direction of Werner Janssen. Since he seems to have a feeling for the style, why cannot Capitol undertake a full-dress presentation of the series?*

What about Honegger?

SIR: My case is a brief one. Why is it next to impossible to hear on the radio, or purchase domestically, records of the works of Arthur Honegger? Modern music by now certainly has a large enough vogue. To illustrate the ridiculous situation, I recently purchased the "Concertino," played by Eunice Norton and the Minneapolis Orchestra . . . on English HMV! Is there one other Honegger *aficionado* in the house?

BOB WRONKER.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Honegger's eclipse, phonographically, has to do very likely with cycles in sponsorship. Some years back there was the vogue of "Rugby," "Pacific 231," and "Le Roi David," leading to this "Concertino" and other things. Most of the late works by Honegger—the "Jeanne d'Arc," "Dance of Death," etc.—have been for large choral and instrumental ensembles, thus discouraging recording here. (Both have been issued in France.) However, the string symphony would not be a special problem. Finally, we may inform reader Wronker that Oscar Levant has recorded the "Concertino" (Fritz Reiner conducting) and it should be along from Columbia shortly.*

"Chants D'Auvergne"

SIR: In regard to your appeal in *SRL* for registration of those who purchased the "Chants d'Auvergne" reissue, I have not noted a statement of their release or where the reissue can be procured. I presume they are the arrangements by Canteloube of folk songs, sung by Madeleine Grey.

ALLEN E. LE HEW.

Clifton Forge, Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *They were reissued summer before last and should be available from any dealer who stocks Columbia records. Or there are several shops listed in the* RECORD MART *which could supply them. Incidentally, to those remiss in this matter, the "I bought 'Chants d'Auvergne'" responses have mounted into the hundreds, but they are still short of even a fractional part of the 12,000 albums sold. Make this your New Year resolution: a postcard addressed to* RECORDINGS, Saturday Review of Literature, *25 West 45th Street, reading "I bought 'Chants D'Auvergne'," signed with name and address.*

Rachmaninoff's "Carnaval"

SIR: Of course, the Rachmaninoff performance of the Schumann "Carnaval" should be again available. I'd love to own it. How about Weingartner's transcription of Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" Sonata?

ROBERT S. BELDEN.

New Brunswick, N. J.

SIR: Put me down as one who wants, and will purchase, a reissue of the Rachmaninoff version of "Carnaval."

S. T. HEMP.

Louisville, Ky.

SIR: Kindly list my name for a proposed reissue of the Schumann "Carnaval" played by Rachmaninoff, preferably on Vinylite.

ERIC SCHAAL.

Forest Hills, N. Y.

SIR: I bought the "Chants D'Auvergne." Would also welcome Rachmaninoff's playing of "Carnaval" and the Schönberg quartets.

ALFRED J. USNICK.

Middle Village, N. Y.

SIR: Add my name to the list of those who will buy a reissue of "Carnaval" as played by Rachmaninoff.

JOYCE TURNER.

Cincinnati, O.

SIR: If Columbia can sell 12,000 sets of "Chants d'Auvergne," surely RCA Victor should not demur at bringing out Rachmaninoff's recording of the "Carnaval."

WILLIAM NEWMAN.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Let's have the Rachmaninoff "Carnaval" reissued by all means.

JAMES FRANKENBERG.

South Bend, Ind.

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Records Over the Nation

A Dealer Survey of Top Record Sellers

City and Store	*Popular Singles*	*Popular Albums*	*Classical Singles*	*Classical Albums*
BERKELEY, CALIF. (*Berkeley Music House*)	I Can Dream, Can't I (D)	South Pacific (C)	Bachianas (C)	Berlioz Requiem (C-LP)
BIRMINGHAM (*Stairway to Music*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Fauré Pavane (C)	Beethoven Eroica (C-LP)
BOSTON (*Mosher Music Co.*)	Old Master Painter (C)	Lost in the Stars (D)	Sleigh Ride (RCA)	I Can Hear It Now, II (C)
CHICAGO (*Hudson-Ross, Inc.*)	Mule Train (M)	Perry Como Christmas (RCA)	Clair de Lune (RCA)	South Pacific (C)
CINCINNATI (*Steinberg's, Inc.*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C-LP)	Masonic Funeral March (C)	Madame Butterfly (C-LP)
DALLAS (*The Record Shop*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Mefistofele — Lontano (Eng C)	Madame Butterfly (C-LP)
(*Whittle Music Co.*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Messiah — Hallelujah (RCA)	Prokoviev Concerto #3 (RCA)
DETROIT (*Campus Record Shop*)	I Can Dream, Can't I (D)	Brigadoon (RCA)	I Vespri — Overture (HMV)	Mozart Concerto #21 (C-LP)
(*Grinnell Bros.*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Clair de Lune (RCA)	That Midnight Kiss (RCA)
(*Doubleday Book Shops*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Jalousie (RCA)	Beethoven Eroica (CT-LP)
LOS ANGELES (*Birkel-Richardson*)	Mule Train (Cap)	South Pacific (C)	Butterfly—Albanese (RCA)	Siegfried Duet (RCA)
MEMPHIS (*Words and Music*)	Mule Train (Cap)	Twin Pianos (D-LP)	Ave Maria (RCA)	Sved-Pagliughi Duets (CS)
MINNEAPOLIS (*Don Leary's Inc.*)	Mule Train (M)	Jolson Sings Again (D)	Polonaise (RCA)	South Pacific (C)
NASHVILLE (*MU Sound Systems*)	I Can Dream, Can't I (D)	Dinah Shore (C)	Warsaw Concerto (RCA)	Nutcracker Suite (RCA)
NEW ORLEANS (*Doubleday Book Shops*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Clair de Lune (RCA)	Turandot (CS-LP)
NEW YORK (*Doubleday Book Shops*)	Mule Train (M)	Edith Piaf (C)	Core 'ngrato—Lanza (RCA)	Hamlet (RCA)
(*Dynamic Electronics*)	Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer (C)	South Pacific (C)	Butterfly—Kirsten (RCA)	Rachmaninoff Concerto #2 (C-LP)
(*Heins & Bolet*)	Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer (C)	South Pacific (C)	Jalousie (RCA)	Nutcracker Suite (C-LP)
(*Liberty Music Shop*)	I Can Dream, Can't I (D)	South Pacific (C-LP)	Bachianas (C)	Beethoven Eroica (C-LP)
(*Rabson's*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Silent Night—Melton (RCA)	Robert Shaw Christmas Chorales (RCA)
OMAHA (*Lyon & Healy, Inc.*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Clair de Lune (RCA)	That Midnight Kiss (RCA)
PHILADELPHIA (*Jacobs Bros.*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Warsaw Concerto (D)	Siegfried Duet (RCA)
(*The Record Shop*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Aida—Lanza (RCA)	Sylphides (RCA)
PITTSBURGH (*Record & Gift Center*)	Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer (C)	South Pacific (C)	Dream of Olwen (C)	That Midnight Kiss (RCA)
PORTLAND, ORE. (*Sherman Clay & Co.*)	Mule Train (D)	South Pacific (C)	Lord's Prayer (RCA)	Erna Sack (CT)
ST. LOUIS (*Doubleday Book Shops*)	Mule Train (M)	South Pacific (C)	Warsaw Concerto (RCA)	Beethoven Eroica (CT-LP)

Compiled as of December 15, 1949.

Key: C—Columbia Cap—Capitol CS—Cetra-Soria CT—Capitol-Telefunken D—Decca HMV—His Master's Voice M—Mercury RCA—RCA Victor

Leaders: Record-buying trends show little change from last month, save that in the popular-single column preference has switched from Frankie Lane's "That Lucky Old Sun" to Frankie Lane's "Mule Train." Last-minute reports on the popular-single situation indicate a strong demand for "Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer." In other categories the votes have gone to "South Pacific," "Clair de Lune," and the Beethoven "Eroica."

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Paul Bowles

author of

THE SHELTERING SKY

Paul Bowles' remarkable first novel is the sensational dark horse of the literary season. *The Sheltering Sky* is being reviewed in a way to make veteran writers envious. Seldom has a new novelist aroused such instantaneous excitement.

Bowles is that rare thing—a writer who waited to live life before he began to write it. He has already made a reputation in music. And for fifteen years he has been roaming about the world with a calm, curious, searching eye for the patterns of human existence. Now, at 38, he has *detonated*—there is no other word for it—*The Sheltering Sky*.

It is the story of an American girl who succumbs to the sensuality of Arab civilization in North Africa, letting herself be carried off by a caravan to a primitive native city deep in the heart of the Sahara. Paul Bowles knows his Arabs and his Africa—he now lives in his own house in the *Casbah* of Tangier—and he brings them to life with an immediacy that recalls E. M. Forster's India.

$2.75

CRITICS ARE SAYING:

LEWIS GANNETT — N. Y. Tribune "*The Sheltering Sky*, it seems to me, is the finest lost-generation novel since the banks closed and the lost boys and girls began coming home from the Montparnasse cafes to find themselves on the farms or in papa's factory."

ORVILLE PRESCOTT—N. Y. Times "Bowles is an accomplished technician in fiction, a master of narrative tension and of emotional atmosphere. He can hold your attention as completely and instill as uneasy a sense of apprehension as a dentist with his drill boring closer and closer to an acutely vulnerable nerve."

CHARLES J. ROLO—The Atlantic Monthly "There is a suggestion of mystery and suspended disaster . . . The amosphere grows charged with the squalor and the exoticism, the strange intensity and the decay, of the Arab world."

TIME "*The Sheltering Sky* is a remarkable job of writing, with a craftsmanship that makes it the most interesting first novel to come from a U. S. writer this year."

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS — N. Y. Times "It brings the reader into sudden, startling communion with a talent of true maturity and sophistication of a sort that I had begun to fear was to be found nowadays only among the insurgent novelists of France."

W. G. ROGERS—Associated Press "I fell under the peculiar spell of this no-man's land where the dazzling light of the sun served not to enlighten but to obscure. It's a whodunit on a cosmic plane."

RICHARD H. ROVERE — Harper's "*The Sheltering Sky* has a bursting strength and passion which very few novels of its sort have. The publishers compare his feeling for Africa with E. M. Forster's feeling for India in Forster's greatest work, and I do not think they are carrying things very much too far."

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